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THE

Compleat Gentleman:

OR, A

DESCRIPTION

Of the ſeveral

QUALIFICATIONS

BOTH

NATURAL and ACQUIRED,

That are neceſſary to form a

GREAT MAN.

Written originally in *Spaniſh*, by

BALTASAR GRATIAN,

And now Tranſlated into *Engliſh*

By T. SALDKELD.

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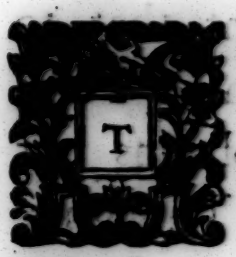
To the Right Reverend

Doctor *James Leſlie*,

Lord Biſhop of Limerick.

My LORD,



THE Work I here preſent to your Lordſhip, hath been dedicated in the firſt *Engliſh* Edition to a Nobleman of the moſt refined Taſte *. This Judgment of the elegant Tranſlator,

* The preſent Earl of *Cork* and *Orrery*.

hath been my Inducement to beg your Lordſhip's Protection for the ſame Work in an *Iriſh* Edition.

The Fame acquired in *Britain* and *Ireland* by the Name of *Leſlie*, is the Subject of the ableſt Pens of both Kingdoms: And though this Circumſtance alone muſt draw the Attention, as it engages the Eſteem of the Public, in Favour of ſo antient a Race; yet I am not ignorant that to Perſons of your Lordſhip's Turn, ſuch a Conſideration obtains but the ſecond Place in their Thoughts, you would rather beam Luſtre back on your great Anceſtors, than receive any from them.

I have

DEDICATION.

I have not, in the uſual Cuſtom, of Dedicators, given your Lordſhip Pain, by ſoliciting, previouſly, your Patronage. It was not neceſſary. The Work *of* a Genius may, with great Propriety, be addreſſed at any Time *to* a Genius: Nor will your Lordſhip be offended to ſee your Name at the Head of a Book, wherein Dignity of Sentiment is recommended, by a paſſionate Warmth for the Happineſs of Mankind.

Nothing neceſſary for enlightening the Mind, or forming the Manners of a truly GREAT MAN is omitted here. Such a Book, therefore, muſt be accept-

able to GREAT MEN, and particularly to thoſe, who ſignalize themſelves early in the Cauſe of Religion and Virtue. I need, therefore, no Apology for the Liberty I have taken, nor for ſubſcribing myſelf,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's

Moſt devoted, and

Obedient Servant,

The EDITOR.

The Translator's Dedication.

To the Right Honourable

JOHN, Lord *BOYLE*,

Now Earl of *Cork* and *Orrery*.

My Lord,

TWO indiſpenſable Reaſons oblige me to prefix your Lordſhip's Name to the following Treatiſe; the one ariſes from the many perſonal Obligations I'm under to your Lordſhip; the other, from the Difficulty of finding any other Perſon ſo proper to exemplify the Character there painted and repreſented by the Author. The Tranſlation on this Account has one Advantage to boaſt of, which the Original had not: There the Character appears to be only imaginary, the Idea of what a great Man ſhould be, ſubſiſting in the Writer's Imagination, and expreſs'd in Colours fetch'd from his own Invention; whereas the *Engliſh* Reader is directed where to find the Character illuſtrated in real Life, which muſt neceſſarily give him the greater Emulation, and make him more ardently aſpire after the ſame Perfection. *Spain* indeed, where

where the greatest Genius must be cramp'd for want of Liberty, without which our intellectual Faculties can never shine in their full Lustre, cannot be suppos'd to produce Examples of so liberal, so improv'd and so extensive an Erudition as *Great-Britain*, where the Frame of our Constitution in Church and State is so happily adapted to the opening and enlarging of our natural Endowments.

Here I might expatiate upon the many happy Talents your Lordship in particular has receiv'd from Nature, as also upon the singular Improvements you have made of them by a successful Application to the most useful and most ornamental Studies: But lest I should offend that Modesty, which is so peculiar to your Lordship, and which at the same Time both shades and adorns those excellent Qualities you are so eminently possess'd of; I shall check my own Inclination, and be silent upon that Subject. Every Body knows how dear, how honour'd, and how conspicuous the Name of BOYLE is among the learned World; and every one, that has the Honour to know your Lordship, must see, in what an abundant Measure you inherit the same Genius, and with what an Increase of Honour and Lustre you are likely to transmit the revered Name to future Generations. I am, with the greatest Attachment and Respect,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's

Most oblig'd and most

Devoted humble Servant,

T. SALDRED.

PREFACE.

IT is unneceſſary to trouble the Reader with much Preface to this little Treatiſe, the Author's Merit being already known, and his extraordinary Genius particularly admir'd in our Country. His *Oraculo Manuel*, as it is moſt elegantly tranſlated into *Latin* by our Countryman Mr. *Clerk*, abundantly ſhews his excellent Taſte and Judgment, his uncommon Knowledge of the World, the Myſteries of a Court, with all the Qualifications neceſſary for that admired, elevated Scene of human Life. But as the Part of a Courtier is what few Perſons (comparatively ſpeaking) have Occaſion to be inſtructed in, and yet that Treatiſe was generally received; this, it may be preſumed, which was writ by the ſame Hand, recommended by the ſame Genius, and calculated for Men of Parts in all Stations, will be more extenſively uſeful, and conſequently more univerſally receiv'd. In ſhort, every Gentleman ſhould be ambitious to unite in himſelf the ſeveral Perfections repreſented in this Diſcourſe, and ſhould lay down the Character there drawn as the Model for his Imitation, as far as it is within the Reach of his natural Abilities. If ſimply

to

to be a Man of Senſe be thought a valuable Character, if barely to be reckoned a Man of Wit be ſomething ſo deſirable, what muſt it be to have both thoſe Talents accompanied with a Genius, improv'd by Learning, and embelliſh'd with all the Ornaments of Virtue, Politeneſs, and good Breeding? Now the Character drawn in the following Tract comprehends all this, and whatever elſe can enter into the Compoſition of a Man truly great, and compleatly accompliſhed. Good natural Parts well cultivated with Literature, a Genius, a true Taſte, a good diſcerning Faculty, a Knowledge of the World, good Nature, good Breeding and Virtue, all theſe Qualities and Accompliſhments harmoniouſly correſponding and agreeing together make up the great, amiable and conſummate Character recommended by the Author. How he has acquitted himſelf in the handling of ſuch a Subject, the Reader will find by the Peruſal of his Writings. I hope, I have not obſcur'd the Beauty of his Thoughts, or injur'd the Elegance of his Language by my Tranſlation. This I can affirm, that I have been religiouſly careful not to deviate from his Sentiments, nor have I chang'd any of his Expreſſions, but where I thought the Propriety of our Tongue made it abſolutely neceſſary.

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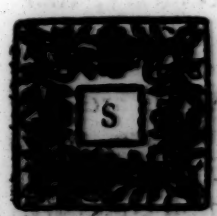
THE

THE COMPLEAT GENTLEMAN.

CHAP. I.

Sense and Genius.



SENSE and Genius are the two Foundations of our Advancement and Glory. Nature seldom bestows them both together: but Art, where-ever she finds them together, may bring them to Perfection. 'Tis only the Privilege of extraordinary Persons to be born with a good Understanding, and a fine Genius, together: 'Tis the Union and Conjunction of these two Qualities, which gives them an infallible Assurance of Reputation and Success. Indeed Sense alone is not unworthy of our Esteem: nay, it ought in Reason to expect it, and is justly entitled to it. However, it seldom attains to any thing of the first Rank, or to any Immortality upon any Account, unless it be accompanied with a Genius. No; Sense alone never rises higher than

to a Half-merit, which fondly condemns and exclaims againſt its hard Fate, the Injuſtice of Fortune, and the bad Taſte of the Age.

But neither is a Genius of much Conſequence or Advantage to us, if it be alone; it then only ſerves to diſcover its own Inſufficiency and Want of Underſtanding.

But ſome Men, and in other Reſpects Men of Judgment too, have been of Opinion, that no Man can have a Genius without having at the ſame Time a proportionable Degree of Underſtanding. And they pretend to juſtify this Opinion by the very Name of the Thing; the Word Genius, according to their Sentiment, ſufficiently ſignifying its Original, and declaring it ſelf to proceed from the Underſtanding; and that in ſuch a Manner, that the Extent of the one is the Meaſure of the other. But Experience fully refutes this Notion, and proves it to be an Error. For we daily meet with Perſons that have a great deal of Senſe, and but little Genius; and others, on the contrary, that have a great deal of Genius, with little Underſtanding.

Now ſince the Qualities of our Minds are the Ornaments and Glory of Human Nature, with what indefatigable Pains and Induſtry ought we to cultivate and improve them all, but moſt eſpecially the Underſtanding? The Underſtanding is to Man, what the Sun is to the Univerſe, a glorious Light, and moſt admirable Ornament. It was for this Reaſon the Poets feign'd *Apollo*, whom they look'd upon as the God of Day, to be alſo the God of Wit and Science. Beſides, the Underſtanding is the very Faculty that diſtinguiſhes us; 'tis our peculiar Characteriſtick, and the Prerogative that renders us conſpicuous and illuſtrious. Can we then too much cheriſh and embelliſh this Jewel?

What-

WHATEVER Difference Birth, Quality, or Fortune ſeem to make between one Man and another, there is really no eſſential Difference between them, but what is made by their Underſtanding; that is the only particular Property which makes them more or leſs Men. Intelligence certainly gives the Angel an eſſential Pre-eminence over Man; Reaſon gives the ſame to Man over Brutes; and the Caſe is exactly the ſame between Man and Man. Such is the peculiar, eminent Prerogative of our intellectual Faculty, that it belongs to that alone, to raiſe us above common and ſenſible Objects, to think, to reaſon, to apprehend, to penetrate into the moſt abſtruſe Things, and to unravel their ſecret Principles; to ſoar to the very Deity, and venture in ſome Meaſure even to define his Nature and Eſſence, though infinite and incomprehenſible. But this noble Superiority above the reſt of Mankind, is not attainable without great Application, nor with that neither, if there be any material Defect in our Frame and Conſtitution.

THE Want of any one of our outward Senſes, deprives the Body, of one Part of its Life, and renders the Soul too, in ſome Meaſure, defective; ſhe remains for that Time incapable of exerciſing thoſe Functions which anſwer to that Senſe, of which we are depriv'd. Then what are the greateſt Part of Men, who want that neceſſary Degree of Underſtanding which ſhould enable them to reaſon, as well as to apprehend? For reaſoning and apprehending are far from being ſynonimous Terms. They ſometimes diſtinguiſh one Man from another, if not in reſpect to the Eſſence of their Reaſon, yet at leaſt in reſpect to the Exerciſe of it, almoſt as much as they diſtinguiſh a Man from a Brute.

MIGHT not the ſubtle Fox in the Fable, cry out at the Sight of many a Gentleman we know,

A fine Head, but without Brains! In thee I diſcover that Vacuum, which the Philoſophers thought not in Nature. It is a Sort of curious Anatomy thus to ſearch and penetrate into Things, and to ſound their Inſides and Bottoms. A fair Outſide is apt to impoſe upon us, and very often ſhelters a Fool from our Notice and Obſervation. Let but an advantageous Appearance be ſeconded by a modeſt Silence, and the moſt ſtupid Wretch ſhall perhaps deceive a Man of the greateſt Sagacity. The very Silence of Perſons, that are of a comely Figure, and a ſedate Countenance, ſerves as a Refuge and Screen for their Stupidity; nay, generally ſpeaking, it is conſtrued to their Advantage; for we are apt to think it proceeds from their Diſcretion and Policy.

But let us return to the Conſideration of Genius. In the Ages of Darkneſs and Idolatry, Genius was exalted into a God, through an extravagant Opinion of its Uſefulneſs to Man, and a ſuperſtitious Idea of its Excellence. And even they, who were the leaſt viſionary among the *Pagans*, thought fit to call Genius, *The aſſiſting Intelligence, or the miniſtring Spirit of the little World*, that is to ſay, of Man. But a reaſonable and chriſtian Philoſophy now looks upon the brighteſt Genius as nothing more than a happy, ſuperior, ſingular Talent for ſome one particular Thing, or ſeveral Things together. Let a Genius then be ſingular, but without giving into Caprice or Extravagance; happy, but not preſumptuous; ſuperior, but without running into Paradoxes or Inconſiſtencies. There is but one infallible Rule to keep us from falling into ſome of theſe Errors; and that is, to be always teachable, and always attentive to the Directions of good Senſe. A Genius of this Sure Stamp and Character is a Prodigy, that is not to be met with every

every Day; 'tis perhaps as rare as a perfect Heroism, that's always consistent, and of a Piece.

THIS extraordinary Genius is neither a Gift of Fortune, nor an Effect of our Studies, tho' it requires our utmost Care and Application; 'tis the peculiar Privilege of our Birth, over which Heaven has presided in a particular Manner. This is its Beginning; and its End is, to form great and noble Designs, to aspire after the first Rank and Dignity, and in a Word to attain to the highest Pitch of Excellence in the Profession, to which it is devoted. And if it makes a judicious Choice in this Respect, 'tis a sure Presage of Success, and a certain Step towards Reputation and Glory.

A GENIUS, though never so good, generally speaking, is not proper for every Kind of Employment, no more than the best Understanding, is fit for every Science, in such a Manner, I mean, as to become eminent and distinguish'd in each. Sometimes a moderate Genius shall easily succeed in an Affair where a more excellent one would be perplex'd, and come off with Dishonour. It often happens too, that a superior and an inferior Genius jump together in their Sentiments, and are of one Mind in regard to the Congruity or Incongruity of the same Things. Passion and Necessity are the Occasions of great Blunders in this Particular. How many Men strain their Genius to their Employment, or bend and force their Employment to their Genius? Such, as will never distinguish themselves by the Sword, might have made an honourable Figure at the Bar. The first Point, as *Chilo* said, is to know our selves, and then to fix upon that which is most adapted and suitable to our Natures.

A SENSIBLE Man no sooner acquires a little Knowledge of Things, and an Improvement of his natural Faculties, but he begins to study him-

ſelf; and when once he knows himſelf thoroughly, he tries, exerciſes, and exerts the Talent, which he perceives himſelf endow'd with. But becauſe Self-love may blind and deceive us, and figure out to our Imaginations a Genius which we have not, we ſhou'd take care not to engage in any thing raſhly, much leſs to drudge on with exceſſive, yet ineffectual Pains in the Proſecution of it againſt the Grain and Bent of our Genius. To ſtrain and force our Talent will put us upon a continual Rack; 'twill always have the Winds and Stars againſt it, and will come upon the Stage only to be hiſs'd off.

Now it is not at all ſurprizing, that a Man's Genius ſhou'd not be qualify'd for every Employment, ſince there are ſeveral whole Nations that don't afford Genius's of every Kind; one is famous for one Species, another for another, and many large and populous Provinces are entirely deſtitute of all. Perhaps the Climate may have as much Influence upon the Nature of our Genius, as it has upon the Complexion of our Bodies. Be that as it will, *Rome* her ſelf, ancient, illuſtrious *Rome*, did not produce Genius's of all Ranks and Orders. Not to particularize every Sort, that was wanting to her, we are aſſur'd ſhe was defective in that elegant Politeneſs, which was the diſtinguiſhing Ornament of *Corinth*; that the Wits of *Rome* went thither on purpoſe to acquire it, and yet had not all of them the good Fortune to return home with that delicate Accompliſhment. The City, that was once the moſt abundant and fruitful of rich Genius's, is now become a barren Soil in that Reſpect, to the greateſt Part of her Inhabitants. *Madrid*, which a certain great Prince ſtyl'd *The Mother of the World*, for having brought forth ſuch a Number of ſublime Genius's, is now a mere Step-mother, on that Account, to the moſt of her Children.

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Once more, we ought always at our firſt ſetting out carefully to ſound and diſtinguiſh our Talents, and then pitch upon the Object that's moſt agreeable to them. When this is done, a Man is in a Condition to taſte and enjoy that Happineſs, which is peculiar to his Mind and Complexion, he then moves in his true and proper Sphere. Is it not abſurd to bring a Jay into a Conſort of Swans? 'Tis equally ſo, to bring a Talent into the Camp, which Nature has form'd for the Bar; or to dedicate a Genius to the Muſes, which ſhe has cut out for the Cabinet: For this is putting them both out of their proper Element.

Some People don't diſtinguiſh a Man's natural Temper from his Genius; but this, in my Judgment, is confounding of Things, the Conſtitution of the Body with the Qualities of the Mind. I muſt own indeed, that our Genius has a Tincture of the Soil and Temperament of our Bodies; for Example, the Genius for Negotiations and Buſineſs, ſuppoſes a Predominancy of Phlegm; and that for Poetry, of Fire. I ſuppoſe, moreover, that for the ſame Reaſon, that one Man's Genius is not qualify'd for all Kinds of Employment; his natural Temper does not ſuit with all Sorts of Perſons; one is diſagreeable for his Melancholy, another for his jovial Humour, this for his Heavineſs, and that for his Vivacity.

All this will appear evident, if we caſt but our Eyes about a little, and ſurvey the different Nations of the World; we ſhall find that the Difference of their Genius's greatly reſembles the Difference of their natural Tempers. The heavy, ſlow Diſpoſitions of ſome Countries, incline them to more ſerious and laborious Studies; the briſk and lively Temper of others, leads them to a more eaſy and agreeable Literature. I add farther, that People naturally conform to the Humours of their Coun-

try, and eſteem a Genius for thoſe very Properties, that render it diſagreeable and contemptible to others; ſo great an Influence have our national Stars over our Minds, as well as our Bodies.

But in thoſe happy Climes, where ſweet Tempers and fine Genius's are more frequent, what an exquiſite Pleaſure muſt it be to live with a Perſon, that a Man reſembles in both theſe Particulars? 'Tis of the greateſt Import in the World to know ſuch a Perſon, to cheriſh and ſecure him by the cloſeſt Affection and Attachment. Two Friends of ſuch a Stamp, that communicate to one another all their Thoughts and Sentiments upon their Writings or Affairs, do from that intercourſe reap ſuch reciprocal Advantages, and enjoy ſuch a mutual peculiar Satisfaction, as none but themſelves can expreſs. This Happineſs, however, has its Bounds and Degrees, and riſes in Proportion to the good Nature, as well as the fine Genius of both Parties. How few People there are in the World that make this Sort of Happineſs the Object of their Purſuits! Chance generally prevents their Choice, and preſides over their Fate in all Reſpects, both with regard to their Friends, and their Condition of Life. 'Tis chiefly upon this Account that ſo many complain of their Fate, and live in this World like a Sort of Adventurers, whoſe Indiſcretion has brought 'em into Fetters and Bondage in a ſtrange Country.

But to return to our Point of Senſe and Genius; we will not take upon us to determine which of the two wou'd deſerve the Preference, ſuppoſing we had them in our Option, by way of Competition; that is to ſay, whether it wou'd be better to have a ſmaller Share of Genius with a great deal of Underſtanding, or a larger Portion of Genius with leſs Underſtanding. Thus much is certain, that both theſe Faculties of the Soul may

may always (as was ſaid before) be perfected by Art; that a good Underſtanding and a fine beautiful Genius together, are Endowments that Fall to the Share of few Mortals; and that many a great Man will live all his Days in Obſcurity, for want of attending to the Suggeſtions, and following the Bent of his Talents.

CHAP. II.

Of a Superiority in the Manner of Speaking and Acting.

HUMAN Nature is not like the happy *Pandora*, feign'd by *Heſiod*. *Pallas* has not thrown into it the Ingredient of Wiſdom; *Mercury*, of Eloquence; *Mars*, of Valour; and *Jupiter*, that certain Air of Superiority which we admire in ſome Perſons in every thing they ſay or do: But yet Study, Reflection, and Application, may daily contribute to bring to Light and improve thoſe Talents, of which as yet we have only the Seeds and firſt Principles. A Man raiſes himſelf by theſe Means, to an Aſcendant and Superiority at laſt, that's awful and commanding. 'Tis enough for his Purpoſe, if he has but the Embryo within himſelf; the Authority which naturally attends Merit, and a certain Sufficiency, which the Knowledge of the World inſpires us with, will bring it by Degrees to its Perfection and Maturity.

THE greateſt Part of Men in this Particular, are apt to run into two Extremes, one of which is Fearfulneſs, and the other Preſumption. Some are ſo diffident in their Nature, or ſo intimidated through other People's Malice and Envy, that they ſuſpect their own Sufficiency and Capacity either of ſpeaking or acting as becomes them. They

have perhaps a rich Fund, which they dare not touch, only for want of being ſufficiently perſuaded that they have it. They ſee nothing but Dangers and Difficulties in every Undertaking; they apprehend and boggle at every Obſtacle in their Way, without ever thinking upon proper Expedients to remove them. The ſtrong Idea they carry along with them of their own Inability, keeps them in a perpetual Perplexity; they tremble to think of enterprizing any thing in the World of their own Accord, and being always irreſolute and undetermin'd, both as to their Wills and Actions, they give up their Minds and Liberty to the ſovereign Diſpoſal of any Body that will take them, with full Power and Authority to manage and controul them, as he pleaſes.

THERE are others, on the contrary, that preſume upon their own Abilities to that Degree, that they think nothing in the World can puzzle or perplex them, and are always extremely well ſatisfy'd with their own Conduct and Diſcourſe. They are charm'd with their own Underſtanding, Projects, Manners, Language, and Behaviour; they are true *Narciſſus*'s, enamoured of their own Perfections; or to expreſs it better, they are like fooliſh Parents, that doat the more upon their Children, the uglier they are. Being ſeriouſly perſuaded in their own Imaginations that they have a Capacity equal to any thing in the World, they make no Secret of their ridiculous Prepoſſeſſion and Vanity; they offer at every thing with an Air of Confidence and Triumph; they fancy themſelves abundantly happy, and long will they enjoy that illuſive, imaginary Happineſs; for to hear them talk, you would think they were utter Strangers to a Diſappointment or Miſcarriage, and to look in their Faces, you would think they knew not

not what it was ever to be diſpleas'd or diſſatisfy'd with themſelves on any Account whatſoever.

THE Medium between theſe two Extremes, is a noble Freedom, a becoming Reſolution, in Oppoſition to a baſhful Modeſty, a reaſonable Aſſurance founded upon a Knowledge of the World, an Authority of Years, or a Diſtinction of Quality. Any one of theſe Advantages ſufficiently entitles a Man to a Freedom of ſpeaking and acting in the Commerce of Life. Shall I ſay it? Even Riches themſelves, give an Aſſurance to the Mind, a Plauſibility to the weakeſt Arguments, and a kind of Weight and Luſtre to the ſillieſt and moſt inſipid Diſcourſe. Happy Advances theſe towards gaining a Superiority over others! But ſo it is; even the Follies and Impertinencies of the Rich are applauded, whilſt the Oracles of a poor Man are ſlighted and deſpis'd.

AFTER all, the ſolid Baſis and Foundation of the Superiority we are ſpeaking of, which renders us truly ſuperior to other People, is real Merit; and this Merit conſiſts in a perfect Knowledge of the World, the Affairs of the Times, ſome certain Sciences, Employments, and Buſineſs, and of the whole Conduct of human Life. By the Help of this Knowledge, a Man enters with a well-grounded Aſſurance into any Negotiation or Affair, be it of what Kind it will, and acquits himſelf of it with Honour and Reputation. He may then ſpeak as a Maſter, yet without affecting the Air or Tone of one; he may then be able to bring over other Mens Minds to his Party, becauſe 'tis eaſy to influence and work upon them, when once he is perfectly Maſter of the Subject in which they are engaged and divided.

BUT this Sort of Aſcendant is not the Effect of bare Speculation; to arrive at it, a Man muſt have a great deal of Experience, as well as Study and

and Reflection; and in order to maintain it, 'tis absolutely necessary that his Talents are kept in continual Breathing and Exercise, without any considerable interruption. For it is only by such an habitual, indefatigable Practice, that this Ascendant can be constantly supported. Thence forward, indeed, no Difficulties or Occurrences will be able to defeat his Measures, or stop his Progress; he'll find in himself all the Presence of Mind, all the Vigour and Strength of Judgment, and, in a Word, all the Faculties and Abilities that are requisite upon the greatest Emergency.

They, who for want of Consideration neglect the timely attaining of this Sort of Authority, live always under a secret Diffidence and Distrust of themselves, which, if it be remarkable, is a great Blemish to their Parts, and eclipses the finest Qualities and Endowments. This Diffidence naturally produces Fear; Fear perplexes and disturbs us; and that Disturbance becomes a Stumbling-block to our Reason, and a powerful Impediment to the Exercise of our Faculties. Nay, farther, let but an excessive Diffidence seize upon a Man that is to speak in publick, either at the Bar, or in Council, and immediately all the Powers of his Soul are suspended; his Understanding is bewilder'd, his Apprehensions lock'd up, his Judgment lost, his Memory disturb'd, his Imagination clouded, and his Tongue tyed; the whole Man is under a total Interdict, as it were, or Incapacity, without Action, and without Words, though he were at other Times a Torrent of Eloquence.

A Man of such an unreasonable Diffidence as this, is sometimes out of Countenance, even in common Conversation among his Equals and familiar Acquaintance. It gives him an Air of Uneasiness, which presages nothing in his Favour; it makes him falter in his Discourse, which is generally

rally a Sign of little Merit, at leaſt it gives the Company a diſadvantageous Idea of his Abilities: Whereas a becoming Freedom, reſulting from a well-grounded Aſſurance, procures a Man an eaſy Acceſs upon all Occaſions, ſupplies him both with Matter and proper Phraſes, and gains him Attention and Regard even from the moſt critical Judges.

THERE is, however, a certain Degree of Modeſty and Reſerve, which we ought always to obſerve in this particular. Firſt, in regard to Perſons we don't know, we ſhou'd uſe great Circumſpection, and keep a more than ordinary Guard upon our Words and Actions. At the ſame Time we ſhou'd attentively conſider them, in order to diſcover their Genius and Tempers, and in caſe we conceive them to be Perſons of Depth, we ought doubly to exert our penetrating Faculties. But we have handled this Subject more at large in another Treatiſe *.

IN regard to Princes, Grandees, and all others in general, that have a Right of Superiority over us from their Quality, Stations, or Characters, it is our indiſpenſable Duty to check and moderate our Aſſurance in their Preſence, but yet in ſuch a Manner as not to put on too baſhful a Countenance. It is of great Import on ſuch Occaſions, to underſtand the juſt Medium, the nice, exact Point between the two Extremes; on the one Side not to offend by too familiar a Liberty; and on the other Side, not to debaſe our ſelves by too ſervile a Baſhfulneſs; not to carry our Modeſty ſo far as to deprive our ſelves of a reaſonable Aſſurance, nor to puſh our Aſſurance ſo far as to forget that Meaſure of Deference and Reſpect that's due to the Company.

* *Aviſos al Varon Atento.*

BUT

But there is a Sort of People in the World, that are always to be treated with an Air of Superiority, even when we have Recourſe to them for their Favour or Aſſiſtance. For if once theſe People find, I won't ſay that you ſtand in Awe of them, but only that you ſhew them Reſpect, immediately they give themſelves unſufferable Airs of Inſolence and Importance. The Perſons I now ſpeak of, are generally ſuch, as Nature had wiſely plac'd in a low Sphere, till the undiſtinguiſhing Hand of blind Fortune lifted them up from their Dung-hill and Obſcurity. God deliver us from ſtanding in need of this Sort of Gentry, juſt releas'd, perhaps, from the Drudgery of ſome Nobleman's Stable or Kitchen, or at beſt from the faithful Service of the Anti-chamber.

A Man's Aſſurance ſhou'd always be ſuited and proportion'd to his Station and Condition of Life. In an Orator it ſhou'd be modeſt and ſteddy; in a Chief Magiſtrate grave and ſerious; in an Ambaſſador ſomewhat ſtately, and yet engaging; in a General of an Army reſolute and bold; in a Sovereign majeſtick and eaſy at the ſame Time. Thus in all States of Life our Aſſurance muſt be qualify'd and regulated, in order to make it becoming and agreeable. Some Nations have this Quality without Labour or Pains; 'tis, as it were, natural to them in general, in the ſame Manner as an Air of Diſorder and Confuſion is to other Countries. The *Spaniards*, above all others, are born with an Ambition to govern and command, which inſpires them with a Kind of Aſſurance from their Cradles; their phlegmatick Diſpoſition, which looks like Pride, but is not ſo, ſtrengthens and improves it, and their Education gives it the laſt and finiſhing Stroke. For as ſome other Nations ſtudy to form themſelves into Suppleneſs and Submiſſion, they, on the contrary, make

make it their principal Endeavour to acquire an awful Superiority of Mien and Deportment.

In ſhort, ſuch are the Advantages of a noble Freedom of Mind, that it contributes to ſet off and adorn every thing about us; our very Figures, Perſons, and Geſtures. And let us not imagine that theſe exterior Things are of no Conſequence or Importance to us; they are certainly ſuch Marks and Indications as prepoſſeſs the World very much in favour of thoſe that have them; they pave the Way to that Aſcendant and Superiority which is ſo requiſite for enhancing the Merit and Value of our Actions. That Superiority which embelliſhes the moſt common and indifferent Things, removes a thouſand Difficulties that would obſtruct thoſe who have it not, opens all the Avenues to Mens Affections, and draws after it a general Approbation and Eſteem. One wou'd imagine Nature had given theſe Men a kind Prerogative of Age above other People; and that they were made to command them, if not by virtue of their Station, yet at leaſt by virtue of their Merit. And yet after all, theſe Gentlemen are not always Perſons of the greateſt Parts and Endowments; but their happy Aſſurance is more prevalent without a ſuperior Merit, than a ſuperior Merit is without an Aſſurance, and that is the Thing which both procures and preſerves the Poſſeſſion of their Superiority.

Some others, of a different Complexion from theſe, only riſe, as I may ſay, from the Laps of their Mothers to fall into Subjection and Servitude. They live entirely dependent upon other People; imbibe and receive their Impreſſions, Sentiments, Ways, and Manners, of all which they have nothing of their own; they live, if I may expreſs my ſelf ſo, altogether upon the Borrow, without the leaſt Exerciſe of their own perſonal Faculties;

for

for which Reaſon one of this Species was once aptly call'd, *Every body's Debtor, the Echo, or Man of Repetition, a Piece of Moſaick Work.*

THERE is another Species yet more contemptible than the former, who profeſſedly devote themſelves to the moſt ſervile Compliances, the moſt baſe and abject Flatteries, upon all Occaſions; and many of them too are Perſons who by their Quality and Birth are raiſed above the common Sort of Mankind; but for the Baſeneſs of their Minds, they may be put upon a Level with the moſt vulgar Wretches in the World.

To conclude; Though the Advantages that reſult from a ſuperior Manner in ſpeaking and acting be never ſo great, yet we are to remember, that it is liable to its Failings and Inconveniencies. He that puſhes it too far, will be tax'd with Pride, Inſolence, Pedantry, and an Affectation of a deſpotick, arbitrary Authority over the reſt of Mankind. We muſt therefore endeavour to gain this Aſcendant over Mens Minds by ſuch Ways and Methods as we have laid down, and not pretend to it, or uſurp it, in an imperious, tyrannical Manner.

CHAP. III.

Expectation, or the Man that knows how to expect. An Allegory.

IN a Chariot made of Tortoiſe ſhell, in the Form of a Throne, drawn by *Remora's*, *Expectation* rode through the vaſt Plains of Time, to the Palace of *Opportunity*. She moved in a ſlow majeſtick Pace, ſuch as *Maturity* requires, without the leaſt Hurry or Diſorder. She repos'd her ſelf upon two Pillows, which *Night* had preſented her with, ſilent Oracles, from whence often proceed the

the beſt Counſels. She had a venerable Air and Aſpect, to which every Day added new Beauty; a Countenance open and ſerene, in ſpite of Cares and Troubles: Her Eyes were modeſt, and her Looks govern'd by *Diſſimulation*; her Noſe *Roman*, a Sign of Wiſdom and Penetration; her Mouth ſmall, and her Lips cloſe, that not one ſuperfluous Word might eſcape her; her Breaſt large, capable of keeping and ripening a Thouſand Secrets; her Stomach ſurprizingly ſtrong, able to devour and digeſt any thing in the World. Her Heart is a kind of Ocean, agitated with furious Tempeſts; an Ocean open and expos'd to all the Torrents of various Paſſions: But *Expectation*, always Miſtreſs of her ſelf, appears not much diſturb'd with them; her Reaſon being ſuperior to her Paſſions, preſcribes them Bounds, which they never paſs. Her Dreſs was not ſumptuous or gaudy, but plain and becoming, being the Work of *Decency*. Her Livery was green, like that of *Hope*. Her Forehead, inſtead of a Crown, was encompaſs'd with a Mulberry Branch, Symbol of Foreſight, with the Addition of theſe Words; *He that knows how to diſſemble, knows how to reign.*

THIS grave Retinue of *Expectation*, was conducted by *Prudence*. It conſiſted chiefly of Men; there were but very few Women amongſt them. They all march'd along with ſome Support or other in their Hands, as is uſual for ancient People and Travellers. The firſt Rank was *Italians*, not ſo much for having govern'd the World, as for having underſtood how to govern it. The next to them were *Spaniards*, then a few *French*, ſome *Germans*, and ſome *Poles*. Theſe latter, to prevent Reproaches, immediately apologiz'd for the Smalneſs of their Numbers, which they imputed to the Coolneſs of their Countrymens Underſtanding, rather than to their Dulneſs or Stupidity. In the midſt

midſt of theſe various Nations was a large void Space, heretofore, as 'tis ſaid, fill'd up by the *Engliſh*; but 'tis added, that ſince *Henry* the VIII's Time, they have quitted the Retinue of *Expectation*. The politick *Chineſe* made up a very remarkable Group, by the Odneſs of their Figures, and the Singularity of their Dreſs.

On each Side of the Chariot march'd a ſelect Company of great Men: As theſe were Perſons that ſhe had ſignaliz'd by crowning their Enterprizes, ſo ſhe ſtill demonſtrated her Favour to them by placing them neareſt her Perſon. Among the reſt appear'd the great *Fabius*, who by his prudent Delays diverted the moſt terrible Thunderbolt that ever *Carthage* produc'd, and reſtor'd the Honour of the *Roman* Common-wealth. Around him you might ſee the *Fabii* of all Nations, and amongſt them the Sages, Philoſophers, and ſuch as were Models and Maſters to others by a conſummate Experience and invincible Patience. *Time* directed the March of *Expectation* and all her Confederates. Seaſon brought up the Rear-guard, which was convoy'd by *Intelligence*, *Counſel* and *Maturity*.

When it was grown late, all of a ſudden ſome furious Battallions of Enemies alarm'd theſe peaceable Travellers. Theſe Enemies to *Expectation*, were *Haſte*, *Unſeaſonableneſs*, and a Hundred more of the ſame Kind, all of them the Offspring and Children of *Imprudence*. *Expectation* was fully ſenſible of the preſent Danger, by reaſon of her uſing no offenſive Weapons; for all thoſe are forbidden her Soldiers, amongſt whom all Violence is prohibited, and all Fury diſarm'd. She then gave Orders to *Moderation* to halt, and to *Diſſimulation* to amuſe the Enemy; whilſt they went to deliberate upon the Meaſures to be taken. The Deliberation was long and tedious, according to the *Spaniſh* Way, but in the End was crowned with

with a happy Succeſs. The Subſtance of what paſs'd in Council, was as follows:

The wiſe *Bias*, who was ſo eminent for the Government of himſelf, and his faithful Attachment to *Expectation*, advis'd her to imitate *Jupiter*, whoſe Thunder wou'd all have been ſpent long ago, if he had not us'd it with Huſbandry and Oeconomy. *Lewis* the XIth, King of *France*, gave the ſame Counſel now, which he left as an Inſtruction to his Succeſſor, in order to make him a wiſe Governor; "*Do but diſſemble*, ſays he, "*I know no Way ſo effectual to cool and ſlacken the* "*Vigour of the Enemy, and to break and defeat all* "*their Meaſures*". *Don John*, the ſecond King of *Arragon*, ſaid, it was very obvious and remarkable, that the *Spaniſh* Dilatorineſs had always been more ſucceſsful than the *French* Vivacity. The great *Auguſtus*'s Rule was compriz'd in theſe two Words; *Feſtina lente*. The Duke of *Alba* only repeated his Opinion upon the Battle of *Lisbon*. The Catholick King *Ferdinand* deliver'd his Sentiments more at large; for being an able Politician, he underſtood the Art of expecting and forbearing, better than any Body elſe; and he knew too that *Expectation* her ſelf was perfectly well ſkill'd in Politicks. Let us but be Maſters of our ſelves, ſays he, and we ſhall eaſily become Maſters of others; Delays ripen Deſigns, and produce Succeſs, whereas Forwardneſs and Haſte are attended with Miſcarriages and Abortions. A Vivacity that does not reſult from Moderation, is unſafe; Advantages may be loſt as ſuddenly as they are gain'd; and it often happens, that a precipitated Enterprize is ruin'd in a Moment, like the Fall of a Houſe, of which ſometimes we have not the leaſt Notice or Apprehenſion, till we are ſurpriz'd with the Noiſe of the Down-fall. To know how to wait and forbear, is the Characteriſtick of great Men;

'tis

'tis the laſt and greateſt Conqueſt over our Paſſions. Vulgar Souls were never capable of Secrets, Patience, obſerving of Times and Opportunities, and of the Violence a Man muſt uſe upon himſelf in order to forbear engaging till the proper Criſis. *Ferdinand* concluded with this *Catalonian* Proverb; *Deù no pega de baſtò, Sino de Saò.*

The Emperor *Charles* V. was pitch'd upon to conclude the Seſſion. He told *Expectation* that ſhe was ſure of Victory, when ever ſhe engag'd, in the Manner ſhe had taught him heretofore; that is to ſay, ſhe need only fence with the Staff of *Time*, which is more ſucceſsful and invincible than *Hercules*'s knotty Club. *Expectation* collected the Suffrages and Advice of the whole Council, and obſerv'd them ſo punctually, that by little and little ſhe got the better of her Enemies, which *Time* and *Patience* entirely routed and defeated. *Judgment*, who was Preſident of the Council, went and related the whole Affair to *Illuſion*, who was not of the Aſſembly; ſhe thereupon determined to undeceive her ſelf, and to reap the Benefit of this Example.

CHAP. IV.

Greatneſs of Soul.

THE Soul has its peculiar Beauties, from whence it derives infinitely more Luſtre than the Body does from any Beauty belonging to it. But of what does this internal Beauty conſiſt? What do you mean by a beautiful Soul? Why, a Soul that is generous, noble, brave, and in a Word every way great: 'Tis this interior Beauty that enhances the Value of the Soul, as much as exterior Beauty adorns the Body, but with this Difference, that the one really deſerves more true Praiſe

Praiſe than we generally beſtow falſe, upon the other.

THIS Greatneſs of Soul, which is, as I ſay, the eſſential Beauty of the immortal Part of us, is to be met with in very few Perſons. It ſuppoſes a Nobleneſs and Elevation utterly unknown to the Generality of Men. Courage is not altogether inconſiſtent with a Meanneſs of Soul; Paſſion may ſupply that upon Occaſion. But as to a true Greatneſs of Soul, they, that are deſtitute of it, can never be ſupply'd with it by any Means in the World; for they have not ſo much as the Idea of it. *Auguſtus* gave a fine Inſtance of the Greatneſs of his Soul, when he overlook'd the bitter Reproaches of an inconſtant, fickle People: His Glory was more diſtinguiſh'd by deſpiſing, than the *Roman* Liberty was by making thoſe Reproaches.

GENEROSITY is inſeparable from a Greatneſs of Soul; it does not confine it ſelf to a Benevolence and Liberality to Friends; it carries its Benevolence even to Enemies, and takes a Pleaſure in doing them Offices of Kindneſs and Munificence. 'Tis true, indeed, this is a Maxim founded upon Chriſtianity; and I maintain farther, that Chriſtianity is the true Foundation of that unlimited Greatneſs of Mind, which extends it ſelf univerſally to all Things, and to all Perſons. This Virtue never ſhines with ſo conſpicuous a Luſtre, as when it meets with favourable Opportunities of taking Revenge. 'Tis ſo far from avoiding thoſe Opportunities through Fear of being provok'd, that it views and conſiders 'em thoroughly, and converts the tempting eaſy Vengeance into an aſtoniſhing Inſtance of Generoſity.

IT was by this Means *Lewis* XII. King of *France*, gain'd an immortal Glory and Reputation: For the *French*, (ſuch, I mean, as are of great Birth,

Birth, and prime Merit) have always given eminent Proofs of their Nobleneſs and Greatneſs of Soul. Some Perſons having affronted *Lewis*, when he was but Duke of *Orleans*, dreaded his Reſentment and their own Diſgrace, whenever he ſhou'd come to the Throne. But this magnanimous, noble ſpirited Prince, ſoon baniſh'd their Fears by theſe memorable Words, which will undoubtedly be repeated and admir'd by all Poſterity: *The King of* France *does not revenge Affronts put upon the Duke of* Orleans. Ordinary, vulgar Souls, can ſcarce give Credit to ſuch an heroick Behaviour, neither can they comprehend it; for, according to their Way of Thinking, a Man ſhou'd not omit the Pleaſure of taking Vengeance, when he had met with ſo juſt a Provocation. But ſhall we not be aſham'd to ſay it after an ancient, eminent Poet? Even the brute Animals are often more generous than we; they ſhew, upon ſome Occaſions, a Sort of Humanity, where Man ſhews nothing but Brutality; and if they degenerate ſometimes in this Particular, is it not becauſe they are corrupted by the Examples of Men? Theſe Expreſſions of *Martial*'s, are ſomewhat bold and ſevere; but the Subſtance and moral Senſe of them is but too true, to our Shame and Confuſion.

FARTHER, a Greatneſs of Soul is not only not contrary to good Policy, but it moreover makes Reaſons of State, which ſeem of themſelves hard and diſtaſteful, appear inoffenſive and agreeable. *Don John*, the ſecond King of *Arragon*, is an eminent Example of this Truth. As ſoon as he had reduc'd *Catalonia*, ſo fruitful a Field of Laurels to that Hero, inſtead of the moſt violent Indignation and Reſentment, he gave an unheard-of Inſtance of Clemency and Generoſity. Having conquer'd a People juſtly obnoxious to his Fury, he was not ſatisfy'd till he had conquer'd himſelf. This *Don John*

John enter'd *Barcelona*, not as an elated Conqueror, whoſe fierce Aſpect ſtrikes the vanquiſh'd with Terror; but as the Father of the Country, as the lawful Monarch, and the beſt of Princes, whom the People meet with joyful Acclamations at his Return from Victory over a foreign Enemy. This was a new Way of making a triumphant Entry into a City, whoſe obſtinate Reſiſtance had coſt ſo much Sweat and Blood. A new Method this of taking Vengeance.

But a Greatneſs of Soul can't otherwiſe reap any Satisfaction from the Conqueſts ſhe gains over the moſt dangerous of her Rivals, which is Envy. 'Tis true ſhe does not ſlight or deſpiſe ſuch Triumphs; but yet ſhe does not pride her ſelf or glory in them. If her Merit at any Time procures her Deference and Reſpect, whilſt Contempt is the Portion of her Competitors, ſhe is not capable of glorying and triumphing in ſuch a Pre-eminence, being an Enemy to all Oſtentation. She abhors above all Things that haughty, ſupercilious Air, that People generally aſſume on ſuch advantageous Occaſions. Sometimes ſhe recedes from her juſt Pretenſions, and even abates of what ſhe might ſtrictly challenge as her due; but in Effect, ſhe loſes nothing by ſo doing: That, which ſhe thus yields and gives up without Intereſt and as ſo much pure Loſs, is generally repaid her with Uſury. This Virtue has yet another Excellence in it, 'tis capable of turning a natural Imperfection to a Man's Advantage, and even a Diſgrace of Fortune too, provided, it be none of thoſe infamous Stains, which neither Art nor Induſtry can ever wipe off. This is a glorious Situation indeed, to be able to adorn one's ſelf even with Misfortunes and Infirmities. In ſhort, when a Man can bravely and frankly prevent the Company upon either of theſe Articles, he ſtops the Mouths of his Adverſaries, and

ſhelters

ſhelters himſelf from their Reproaches. Nor has this Sort of Confeſſion any Thing in it that's mean or ſneaking; it proceeds from a noble, ingenuous Sincerity, which gains the Eſteem of all civiliz'd People: For as the Praiſe, which we beſtow upon our ſelves, really vilifies and leſſens us; ſo likewiſe the Blame, which we frankly take to our ſelves, turns to our Honour and Advantage.

Besides, a Greatneſs of Soul is a kind of Armour to a Man, it ſerves him as a Shield againſt Injuries, Affronts and Raileries, and againſt ſome Truths too, which might otherwiſe be turned to his Reproach. Thus he triumphs over theſe little Incidents in human Life by making them a genteel Diverſion; by one obliging Word to the offending Party; by a Politeneſs, which turns the Blow upon the Aggreſſor; by an Air of Courteſy, that ſtrikes him ſilent without ſpeaking to him; by a certain Sweetneſs of Countenance, that confounds him without retorting upon him, or ſaying any Thing to ſhock him. For ſuch engaging Ways as theſe are the conſtant, inſeparable Attendants of a great Soul. They ennoble and dignify our Actions by ſhewing the generous Principle from whence they flow.

Even a Sovereign himſelf, arrayed with theſe external Beauties of a great Soul, need not be afraid to come down, as it were, from the Throne, and put himſelf upon a Level with his People. He need not ſcruple to diveſt himſelf of the Reſerves and Airs of Majeſty, to appear in the plain, ſimple Quality of a Man; for in Truth he is more noble and honourable conſidered as a Man, than as a Monarch. He may therefore without Danger ſtoop to the Behaviour of a private Perſon, and ſeem to forget his Sovereignty: For his Actions alone, tho' common and indifferent, yet being always noble and graceful, will ſufficiently remind

others

others that he is their King, and moreover that he deſerves to be ſo, if he were not. 'Tis true, indeed, there are bounds to be kept in this Particular; he muſt not ſtoop ſo low, as really to undervalue and debaſe himſelf. But we have no Occaſion to inſiſt much upon this Point, for the Height of their Situation, and the Superiority of their Rank, will of themſelves ſufficiently inſtruct them in that Article. We have much more Reaſon to fear their being too haughty, than too popular.

AFTER all, we are not to imagine that a Greatneſs of Soul is entirely exempt from the Conflict of all Vices. No, but it conquers and ſubdues them by Modeſty and Humility, and ſubſtitutes Virtues in their Stead, which it hides and conceals from the World as much as poſſible. The Vice, which of all others is the moſt odious to it, and over which it triumphs more openly, and with a Sort of Pride, is Baſeneſs, Meanneſs of all Kinds, Jealouſy, Treachery, Revenge, Envy, Littleneſs of Mind and Heart; all theſe are ſo directly contrary to the Nature of a great Soul, that it cannot poſſibly diſſemble its extreme Abhorrence of them: Inſomuch, that were it never obliged to declare it ſelf in this Reſpect, yet its very Conduct and Behaviour, the faithful Interpreters of the Heart, would always atteſt its noble and generous Sentiments.

THESE are certainly the Things in which true Heroiſm conſiſts: No Perſon can be truly a great Man without a Greatneſs of Soul; and with that any one is a great Man, let him be in what Station ſoever he will.

NEVERTHELESS, in my Opinion, this Excellence does not ſhine out in its utmoſt Perfection, but in Perſons of noble Extraction or diſtinguiſhed Characters. Every Body, I know, is not of this Sentiment; but if they would thoroughly examine

the Nature, Extent, and Exercise of this Virtue, probably they would come over to this Opinion. But be that as it will, if a Distinction of Rank and Quality, and a Pre-eminence of Character and Dignity, do not give any new Degrees of Perfection to it, they do at least adorn it with an additional Grace and Beauty.

CHAP. V.

What Knowledge is proper for a Gentleman in the Commerce of the World.

SOME Persons are remarkable for a certain agreeable Knowledge, a kind of genteel and useful Learning, which makes them acceptable and caressed wherever they go. This Knowledge is of a Nature different from all other; it is not to be acquired from Books, nor is it to be learnt in the most eminent and flourishing Universities. From what Fountain then does it spring? From a good Taste, and sound Judgment.

SOME Men, we find, have a particular Talent at making a right Estimation of Things, and at gathering up every Thing that is amusing or instructive: They are perfectly well skilled in the Business of the Times, and know to a Tittle all such Subjects, as People are most affected with in the Commerce of Life. These are the Oracles of Society, and Masters in the Art of Pleasing: 'Tis of these Gentlemen we must learn to form our selves for that particular Knowledge, which renders a Man an agreeable Companion; for that Knowledge is communicated from one to another by the Means of Conversation; it becomes by Degrees a Sort of Tradition of amusing and profitable Things; these are handed down and transmitted to others, who become Depositories of them successively:

ſively: Thoſe again contribute to improve the Stock, which they derived from other Peoples Labours, and ſo become in their Turns Models and Patterns of a good Taſte, and a true diſcerning Faculty, upon which this Knowledge we are ſpeaking of, entirely depends.

INDEED every Age conſtantly affords Perſons of a proper Stamp and Character to perpetuate this Knowledge: Our own may boaſt of as conſiderable a Number as any of the precedent Ages of our Anceſtors. They, in my Opinion, have no other Advantage over us, but that they were before us, and are now no more. The Preſence of Perſons is generally a Diminution of their Value; and were a Man a Prodigy for Virtue, Wit, Learning or Abilities, he would yet ſtand in Need of another Age, or another Country, to obtain that Share of Eſteem which was due to his Merit and Qualifications. Praiſe is meaſured by the Diſtance of Time and Place; 'tis a kind of forced Homage, which the World with-holds and keeps back as much as poſſible, and chuſe to pay rather at a Diſtance, than near at Hand. Whereas Blame on the contrary is a Sort of Tax, which Envy and Prejudice impoſe by Way of Advance upon the Merit of their Countrymen and Contemporaries.

BUT to return from our Digreſſion. The principal Object of this agreeable and uſeful Knowledge is the Theatre of the buſy World, the State of Foreign Courts, the different Scenes of Fortune, the Cuſtoms and Manners of various Nations, their preſent Intereſts and Springs of Action, the moſt remarkable Tranſactions of Princes and great Men, and the ſeveral Events of their Politicks; the Cauſes, Effects and Wonders of Nature; the Injuſtice, Caprice, and unexpected Turns of Fortune. In the next Place we are to

collect and extract what is moſt curious and beautiful in the Works of Literature, what moſt touching and affecting in News, moſt refined in eloquent Diſcourſes, moſt poignant in Books of Criticiſm, moſt inſtructive in Hiſtory, the Reaſons why ſuch and ſuch Enterprizes have ſucceeded or miſcarried, the noiſy Preparations of War, and the conſiderable Engagements at Land or Sea: Objects that keep the Univerſe in Suſpence between Hope and Fear! Ample Subjects of Renown, ſometimes deceiving, and ſometimes deceived!

Besides theſe Things a Man ſhould make a Collection of Abridgments, of tragical Cataſtrophes, and diverting Stories; of Wiſemens Aphoriſms, happy extemporary Sayings, choice Jeſts, epigrammatick Points, ſharp Repartees, and all ſuch witty Turns and Conceits as are conſiſtent with Virtue. This is a Sort of neceſſary Proviſion to qualify us for agreeable and polite Converſation. Some Part of this may be gathered from antient Authors, but the greater Part from the Modern. All the fine Sayings, pithy Maxims, dry Jokes, and comick Phraſes, that are modern and of freſh Date, are moſt grateful to our Taſte, and tickling to our Imaginations; for the natural Beauty and Agreeableneſs of the Things themſelves is ſtill raiſed and heightened by the additional Grace and Charm of Novelty. Obſolete and antiquated Phraſes, Facts heard a thouſand Times over, Jeſts worn Thread-bare by Uſe and Repetition, are good for nothing but to fill up old Worm-eaten Collections, the proper Taſk of little Grammarians and Pedants.

But another Thing, which ſtill more diſtinguiſhes a Gentleman, is a perfect Knowledge of the great Mens Characters, who are the principal Actors upon the Stage of the World. He knows what Parts they act, and how they acquit themſelves

ſelves of them; for what Reaſons, and upon what Accounts they are hiſs'd or applauded. He knows all the famous Men of every Nation and Kingdom, all ſuch as are eminent and illuſtrious for their Birth, Rank, Learning, Abilities, Merit, and above all for their Virtues. Theſe laſt are a Sort of Planets to a State, the Cauſes of its Glory and Proſperity. All theſe excellent Qualities he weighs in his clear, unbiaſs'd Underſtanding, without either extenuating or enhancing them; and as to their ill Qualities, his Wiſdom and Diſcretion keeps him ſilent upon that Head, unleſs his Duty compels him to ſpeak. For he examines and penetrates into the Whims and Caprice of one, the Weakneſs of another, the Vanity of this, the Meanneſs of that; in a Word, into the particular Defect by which each of them is diſtinguiſhed, and which counterpoiſes the Merit he has in other Reſpects. With this Knowledge and Inſight, built on a profound Judgment and a true diſcerning Faculty, he reduces to the moſt exact Point of Truth and Accuracy a Thouſand Things, numberleſs Diſcourſes and Facts, which the World every Day takes Pleaſure in placing to the Account of great Men. And if he does not ſucceed ſo far as to undeceive others upon theſe Topicks, he at leaſt enjoys the ſecret Satisfaction of being out of the Number of thoſe that are blinded and impoſed upon.

Nay, this Talent for Society and Converſation is ſometimes more ſerviceable than all the Liberal Arts and Sciences together. Not that this excludes other Sciences, be they never ſo ſerious; on the contrary it ought to conſider them as its chief and ſureſt Report: So that it is not in the Compariſon of Excellence, but Uſefulneſs only, that this is ſometimes preferable to more profound Learning. And I add, that being the genuine Fruit and Effect of a good Taſte, it is (if I may be allowed

to call it ſo) the Grace and Ornament of the ſublimeſt Knowledge: For 'tis that alone which can place the other in a proper Light, and make it conſpicuous in Converſation. 'Tis, in my Judgment, on many Occaſions more commendable to be capable of writing a Letter well, or of applying one Word or Sentence appoſitely, than to have heaped up in one Head all the Learning of the *Bartola's*, and the *Balda's*.

'Tis therefore an ineſtimable Happineſs to us, that every Age has produced able Genius's in this Art of obſerving and pointing out to us, whatever may contribute to embelliſh this Learning ſo proper for a Gentleman in the Converſe of the World. How many fine, beautiful Expreſſions, would never have reached us, but for theſe faithful Echo's, that have ſucceſſively repeated them from one to another, till ſome Pen at laſt has made them immortal? How many excellent Pieces of ſecret Hiſtory of *Alexander*'s, *Cæſar*'s, and *Alphonſa's* of *Arragon*; how many wiſe Axioms, fine Strokes, and delicate Touches of Wit, would have eſcap'd our Hiſtory and Poetry, had it not been for theſe living Libraries, from whom contemporary Authors have collected them for the Pleaſure and Improvement of Poſterity? Invaluable Treaſures, which we have inherited from one Age to another, as our Grand children will inherit them from ſuch, as the preſent Age ſhall add to the Number! Treaſures, ſo much the more worthy of our Reſearches, as they are the true Riches of the Mind and Underſtanding!

But the Perſons poſſeſſed of this uſeful and agreeable Learning, are not very numerous. It behoves us to ſeek out for them as *Diogenes* did for the Man with a Candle in his Hand at Noonday. If you be ſo happy as to find ſuch a one, take care to embrace the Opportunity of reaping the

the valuable Fruits of his excellent Talent. Men with great Reaſon run eagerly after ingenious Writings, in which an exquiſite Taſte, and juſt Diſcerning, are conſpicuous; but is there not much greater Reaſon to ſeek out and ſtudy ſuch Men, as are themſelves Models of both thoſe excellent Faculties? We run with too much Eagerneſs after ſome Perſons, when we have ſome pitiful Advantage, or ſordid Intereſt, at ſtake; but in the other Caſe 'tis a laudable Deſire, that inſpires us, a Deſire to learn of others, and to participate with them of ſuch Goods as enrich us without impoveriſhing them. Let us not be of the Number of thoſe, who refuſe the Opportunities of increaſing their Knowledge, rather than another Perſon ſhould have the Reputation of contributing to their Improvement.

After all, there are infinite Numbers of People that frequently hear and ſee the Productions of the fineſt Wits, and moſt polite Genius's, and yet return Home as ſtupid and empty as they came out. For indeed where there is an abſolute Barrenneſs, and want of Soil, neither Art nor Induſtry can compenſate the Defect. But as the ingenious Bee diſcerns and culls out the Flowers that are moſt proper for the Extraction and Compoſition of her Honey; ſo the Man of fine Taſte picks out the choice Stories, and the curious Strokes of Wit, which the Maſters in the Art pertinently ſcatter and interſperſe in Converſation. Theſe he imitates, and lays down as his Models to copy after, that by Time and Application he may attain to the ſame Excellence. But ſuch Obſervations cannot be made by a Perſon that has no Taſte; 'tis ſo much Nectar and Ambroſia loſt upon him; he's made only for groſs Meats, and coarſe Entertainment. What ſtrange Diſpoſitions and Tempers are theſe for the Converſation of Life, always

ſhut

ſhut up in a narrow Circle of the moſt frivolous and trivial Things?

But there is another Species of Men altogether as contemptible as theſe, a Sort of People that chuſe and affect a State of Ignorance. They acquit themſelves of nothing but their animal Functions; have no Underſtanding, unleſs of the Meats and Diſhes that are to make up an Entertainment; no Taſte, but for luſcious Morſels and various Liquors; no Converſation, unleſs it be upon Ragoo's, in which they are exactly well ſkill'd, and know all their ſeveral Names and Ingredients. Of what Uſe are inteſlectual Faculties to ſuch Creatures as theſe? Their Reaſon ſleeps, their Imagination is lethargick, their Judgment without Exerciſe, and their Memory empty: They differ from the very Dregs of the People, that are ſo abject and deſpicable in their Eyes, in nothing but ſenſual Objects, in Luxury and Gluttony. This is ſo far from living like Men of Condition and Quality, that it is not living like rational Creatures. Among the People of Rank, one Half of their Time is taken up with Converſation and Company; how ſhameful is it then to let all that be ſpent without Honour or Improvement!

CHAP. VI.

Be not unequal. A Satyr.

'Tis no Apology for Faults and Defects, that they belong to a great Man; they are not the leſs Faults upon that Account; but, on the contrary, the more obvious and notorious. Is not a Stain upon a Brocade, or a rich Sattin, more viſible and remarkable, than upon a coarſe ordinary Stuff? Now of all the Imperfections of great Men, one of the moſt common and obſervable, is a Fickleneſs

Fickleneſs of Mind, or a Spirit of Inequality. They are much more ſubject to this Failing, than the common People are; for beſides its being natural to them, they take a Pleaſure in the Affectation of it: And yet when they are poſſeſſed of this Humour, what is the Conſequence of it? Why, their Behaviour runs in a conſtant Viciſſitude of Good and Evil, Love and Hate, Favour and Ill-will, and ſuch like eternal Contradictions and Inconſiſtencies.

The Novices at a Court, when they ſee this ſtrange, motley Temper, are apt to fancy themſelves inevitably ruin'd every Moment; but the old, ſtaunch Courtier, is not at all ſurprized or alarmed at it. The Way of a Court is a mere Trade, which has its Maſters and Apprentices: To theſe it is a Taſk and Difficulty; to thoſe it is only an Amuſement and Diverſion: The former find Matter of Conſolation in that which diſheartens and confounds the latter; they know by long Experience that the ſame Inconſtancy, which is the Cauſe of their ill Uſage to Day, may ſerve to make them careſs'd to-Morrow. Thus are they accuſtomed to extract a Remedy out of the very Cauſe and Origine of their Diſeaſe. But after all, how wiſe and happy is that Man, who can look upon the Rocks and Quick-ſands of a tempeſtuous Court with a ſerene Eye, can calmnly and prudently fathom its Depths and Dangers, who neither hopes nor fears too much, who relies upon nothing, and is therefore never ſurprized nor diſappointed.

In ſhort, a Prince of an unequal Mind is directed by no Rules, but only by Chance, Caprice, Humour, and Whim; is neither determined by Reaſon, Merit, nor Underſtanding. In the Morning he ſays *yes*, in the Evening *no*; he changes in an Hour's Time from white to black, to favour or to mortify you, without being led by any reaſonable Motive

Motive to one Side or other. But what is the Reaſon that great Men are generally more fantaſtical, and conſequently more unequal, than People of lower Rank? It is becauſe the great Men, being more at Eaſe in their Fortunes, and for that Reaſon more free from Fears, are more at Leiſure to grow whimſical, and to make their Fancy their Law. Beſides, in the Opinion of ſome great People (though 'tis a very chimerical Opinion, God knows) to ſay one while, I will have it ſo, and another while, I will not, is a Means to let us ſee they are both their own Maſters and ours. Thus, in Truth, is Wiſdom generally more remote from an exalted, than from an inferior Station. But, in any Condition whatſoever, the wiſe Man is always equal: If the Circumſtances of Affairs require any Alteration to be made in his Conduct, he makes it; but this is not being unequal; this, properly ſpeaking, is not changing; it is only conforming to right Reaſon, which obliges him to ſubmit to Times and Occaſions: It is Wiſdom, becauſe it is Neceſſity; and it is Equality of Mind, becauſe it is Wiſdom.

GREAT Perſons are not only ſubject to Inequalities, with regard to the Perſons they have to do with, but even with reſpect to Virtue too; to the End, I ſuppoſe, that in all Things they may breathe out nothing but deſpotick Power, and abſolute Independence. *Demetrius* puſhed theſe Variations and Inconſtancies very far; nor did he want Cenſors to pay him off with bitter and ſatyrical Reflexions. *Demetrius*, was every Day unlike himſelf: Peace and War formed him into two ſuch different Men, that there was not the leaſt Mark of Reſemblance left in his whole Conduct. In time of Peace, he was a Medley of all Vices; and in time of War a Compoſition of all Virtues. When he was at War with the Enemies of the State,

State, he was at Peace with Virtue; and when he was at Peace with the Enemies, he was at War with Virtue. What ſtrange Revolutions are made in the Heart of Man, through Idleneſs, or Employment! But there never was ſuch another Inſtance of Inequality in the World, as *Nero*. *Nero*, that Monſter in all Kinds of Vices, was ſtill more ſo in this Reſpect, that whilſt he was Maſter of the World, he was a Slave to himſelf.

Some People are born vicious, and grow more and more ſo, for want of a Firmneſs and Reſolution of Mind to undergo the Conflicts that are neceſſary in order to gain a Conqueſt and Maſtery over themſelves. Others attain to a happy Perfection by the Dint of ſtruggling with themſelves, and ſubduing their Inclinations, ſo as to acquire a Kind of new Nature. If our Inequality and changing proceeded in this Manner from bad to good, and from good to perfect, it would then be worthy of our Praiſe and Eſteem: But it generally draws the other Way, from bad to worſe, and from worſe to worſt of all. Vice is always obvious to us, and confronts us, but we have only a Side-glance, as it were, at Virtue: The one obtrudes it ſelf upon us, the other ſeems to ſhun and avoid us; the one courts us under the Appearance of Pleaſure, and the other hides it ſelf from us under the Appearance of Pain.

But is Inequality then in Reality ſo great a Fault? Does not the whole Univerſe turn upon Changes and Viciſſitudes? Why ſhould not Man then, who is an Epitome of that, imitate it in this Reſpect? The ſame Climate repreſents to our View high Mountains and deep Vallies; Symbols of the Heights and Depths of an unequal Mind. And yet it is this Mixture and Variety, which makes the Richneſs and Beauty of the Climate. Is there any thing in the World more unequal and variable

variable than Time? One While it is crowned and adorned with a beautiful Variety of gay, ſmiling Flowers, another While naked and deformed with griſly Froſts. In one Word, a perpetual Change and Viciſſitude reigns throughout all Nature, and from thence reſults the moſt excellent Harmony. Would not Man, in like Manner, be the more perfect, were he continually varying and changing; were he as much a *Proteus* in Mind and Reality, as that in the Fable was in Picture and Figure?

No; the Mind of Man ought not to change its Situation, as the World does its Face: The Perfection of the one differs in this Reſpect from the Perfection of the other. This Univerſe is a Sort of general Theatre, where all imaginable Changes and Varieties ought to be repreſented; but Man is as one Perſon or Actor upon the Stage, whoſe Character ought to be but one, conſiſtent and uniform, always like it ſelf, unleſs when he directly changes his Part to act in another or ſuperior Character. Any other Change is againſt Reaſon, and at leaſt a Levity, which the World will always account a Fault.

THERE's yet another Species of Men ſo unequal and unlike themſelves in their very Judgments, either upon Matter of Buſineſs, or Points of Learning, that they ſeem to take Pleaſure in belying their own Merit and Reputation. Sometimes they ſhall reaſon and diſcourſe ſo judiciouſly, that it would charm you to hear them; at other Times there is not the leaſt Grain or Shadow of Senſe in all their Arguments; you would pity their Weakneſs and Folly. And yet theſe are none of your vulgar fickle People, that happen to be ſometimes right, and ſometimes wrong, in every Thing they do. Thoſe I am now blaming, are your volatile, mercurial, weak Men, whoſe Judgments are biaſs'd by Paſſion or Prejudice, and who being governed

governed by one or other of theſe, count that deteſtable to Day, which they reckoned admirable Yeſterday. The Converſation of ſuch Men is not much courted, whatever Service they may be capable of doing; becauſe, forſooth, their Parts are good, a Man muſt never know how to keep in with them, nor upon what Footing he ſtands in their Favour. Are they prepoſſeſs'd, or are they not? None but themſelves can tell; let us wait till we know how it is with them in that Particular.

CHAP. VII.

The Man of all Hours, or one that's fit for every Thing. The Author's Letter to his Friend Laſtanoſa.

DEAR *Laſtanoſa*, we ought neither to be always laughing like *Democritus*, nor always weeping like *Heraclitus*. Where the wiſe Man in holy Writ diſcourſes of Time, he marks out to us the different Uſes and Employments for it. That there is a Time for Labour, and a Time for Reſt, a Time for one's ſelf, and a Time for others; in the ſame Manner every thing ought to have its proper Place, not only for the Sake of preſerving an Order and Regularity in our Conduct, but for the better enlarging and improving our Capacities. Whoever has gain'd this Point, thus to diſtribute and diſpoſe of all the Hours of his Life, is qualified to pleaſe all Taſtes, and to be the Darling of Mankind. Man is originally a Kind of little Sketch of the whole Creation; he ſhould therefore make it his Aim, and endeavour to become an Epitome, as it were, of the whole civil and moral Syſtem. For my Part, I cannot eſteem that a happy Genius, which is confined and ſhut up in one Thing, though it were the moſt excellent and ſublime of all the Sciences. What would it be then, if that

ſingle Object of its Knowledge were but common and indifferent? And yet this is the Caſe with moſt Men of Buſineſs and Employment in the World. The Soldier talks of nothing but Campaigns; the Merchant of nothing but Traffick; the Banker of the Price of Money, and the Courſe of Exchange; and the Lawyer of his Cauſes and Proſecutions; they have no Underſtanding in any thing elſe. Such Diſcourſe as this, always upon one Note, is mortifying to the laſt Degree: It makes a Man ſtop his Ears, or, if he keeps them open, it is only to mimick and counterfeit ſuch Gentlemen, and to render them the more ridiculous. The Happineſs of human Life conſiſts in a Diverſity of Circumſtances, in the ſame Manner as Harmony conſiſts in a Variety of Sounds.

HOWEVER, there is a Sort of People that a Man is willing to be acquainted with, though they are not capable of entertaining him upon two different Subjects. But then he viſits them no farther than he has Occaſion for their Information, and upon that Account he muſt be content to endure the oſtentatious Diſplay of their ſingle Science. There is another Species that a Man would be glad to avoid, becauſe their Knowledge is frivolous and trifling; and when once they are got upon the Topick of their inſipid Niceties, their ſilly inſignificant Stories, their affected Witticiſms, which they have had by Heart for many Years, they run on with an everlaſting Impertinence. This is their Strong-hold; hither they fly right or wrong, and there they will dwell for Hours together; nor is it poſſible to draw them out of this Intrenchment: Meer *Syſiphus's* of Converſation, which they perpetually keep rolling the ſame Way. Every ſenſible Man dreads theſe Bablers of reiterated Trifles, that like Paraſites run on in a conſtant Circle of inſipid Repetitions. To be obliged to undergo theſe

theſe inſuppportable Converſations often, would be putting human Patience to too ſevere a Trial; a Man would rather chuſe to ſeclude himſelf for ever in the ſolitary Retirement of his own Cloſet. The Company of ſome certain Male-contents too, that are always exclaiming againſt the Injuſtice that is done them, is, in my Opinion, no leſs inſupportable. In ſhort, for my Part, I would give the World to be delivered from any Man whatſoever, that has but one Thing in his Head and Underſtanding.

But, dear *Laſtanoſa*, a Man makes himſelf Amends for this tireſome Scraping upon one String, by the Converſe of ſuch agreeable Friends as are capable of touching every Note; Friends that can adapt themſelves to every Thing, to the ſeveral Diſtinctions of Perſons, the Diverſity of Occurrences and Incidents, and the Variety of Topicks for Converſation. One ſingle Friend of this Stamp, is better than a Thouſand others; a Man cannot ſet too great a Value upon ſuch a Treaſure, when once he has been ſo happy as to find it. Such a Friend is born with a Greatneſs of Mind, with an extenſive Capacity, an exquiſite Taſte, and univerſal Genius. His good Nature ſuits it ſelf to the Reach of every Body he converſes with, and he is always willing to conform to it. His good Senſe makes him equally capable of carrying on a grave or a pleaſant Diſcourſe; and he is always diſpoſed to continue either as long as the Company pleaſes, and no longer. One Word upon any new Subject of Diſcourſe, is a ſufficient Intimation to him to drop that in Hand, and to enter upon the other. Thus is he happily poſſeſſed of all the Parts of uſeful and ſocial Knowledge, beſides that Erudition which denominates what we call a learned Man, in the Republick of Letters. With theſe Accom-

pliſhments one ſingle Man becomes ſuitable and agreeable to all Mankind.

In antient Times, one ſingle Food ſent down from Heaven to our Forefathers, both ſupported them, and at the ſame time gratified all their different Taſtes and Appetites. This is a Kind of Picture or Repreſentation of thoſe Genius's that have the Art of transforming themſelves, as it were, into all Characters, and of pleaſing all Sorts of People. Beſides a tolerable Knowledge in Mathematicks, Philoſophy, Divinity, Hiſtory, Medals, and polite Learning, they are ſkill'd too in Painting, Sculpture, Gardening and Architecture. And yet all theſe various Ideas, ſo foreign and contrary to one another, do not claſh or interfere in theſe Gentlemen; as their Apprehenſion and Conception of them was at firſt clear and diſtinct, ſo they deliver and communicate them upon Occaſion, with the ſame Clearneſs and Perſpicuity. It would be ſtrange if ſuch Men as theſe thought and lived only for themſelves. But you and I are acquainted with ſome of them, who are ſo polite and well-bred, as to favour us with a Part of their Time and Converſation.

All theſe fine Qualifications are not ſo much the Effects of hard Labour and Study, as of the uſing and exerciſing the Talent that was given them for that End. An extenſive Talent or Genius ought not to be confined to one Object alone; that would be detrimental both to it, and to the Publick. When a Man has receiv'd (as I may ſay) ſuch an unlimited Bleſſing from Heaven, it would be an Inſtance of the greateſt Ingratitude to ſtint and limit the Uſe of it. Indeed a narrow, limited Genius, may dwell upon one Thing, and confine its Taſte to that only; Nature has chalked him out but a ſmall Sphere, and there let him remain, provided he does not teaze and torment us with his one Topick

pick of Learning, to which he is attached. But an univerſal Genius, that has derived Improvement from all Occaſions and Occurrences, bends and conforms to every thing: He varies the Notes, and changes the Subjects of Converſation, according as it ſuits with Decorum, and the Pleaſure of his Companions. To be always in a grave Tone, dulls the Company; to be always jeſting, cloys it; always philoſophizing, ſmells of Pedantry; always criticizing, is to act the Scholiaſt or Commentator. Every Subject of Diſcourſe has its proper and ſuitable Time, as every Sort of Fruit has its proper and limited Seaſon.

No Man living obſerves this Maxim more nicely, than a certain great Man of this Age, whom you are not unacquainted with. At the Head of an Army, he is a compleat General; at Court, he is an accompliſhed Courtier; in Council, a judicious Stateſman; at Table, a moſt agreeable Companion; in his Retirement, all the Sciences are Objects of his Application; and in the ſocial Part of his Life, there is nothing out of the Sphere of his Knowledge and Converſation.

It was not thus with another Perſon of the Army of your Acquaintance, whom the World rightly judged to be more vain-glorious than brave. Once at a Court-Entertainment, a Woman of Quality offered to lead this Gentleman out to dance with her; he excuſed himſelf to the Lady, by telling her, he had never learnt *to move his Feet to Muſick and Meaſure*; he *only knew how to move his Arms to put his Country's Enemies out of their Meaſures. If a Man be good for nothing but Fighting*, replyed the Lady, *methinks, in Time of Peace, it would beſt become him to ſit quietly at Home, in Imitation of your Sword there, that takes its Reſt in the peaceful Scabbard.* The Cavalier's Apology was

thought very unbecoming, and only fit for the Mouth of an *Amadis*.

No, dear *Laſtanoſa*, if a Man would be a Perſon of all Hours, and appear fit for every thing, there is no Part, but what he ſhould be capable of acting: He muſt be ſometimes grave, and ſometimes gay; one While a Philoſopher, and another While a Trifler: A Man muſt be all this, I ſay, or at leaſt appear to be ſo, according to the Circumſtances of Time and Place. In ſhort, he muſt be ſometimes for himſelf, and ſometimes for other People. Thus is the Time of Life to be portioned out and divided. The firſt, and moſt eſſential Part of it is to be allotted to our ſelves, and the Remainder is to be dedicated to Mankind, for the keeping up and maintaining of that Fellowſhip and Society which the divine Providence has appointed. But though there be a Time for all Things, yet we muſt remember there is none allowed for any thing that is repugnant to Honour and Conſcience.

CHAP. VIII.

The fine Underſtanding. A Dialogue between Don Andrew *and the* Author.

Don And. 'TIS a common Saying, that few Words are ſufficient to make a Thing intelligible to a Man of Senſe.

Auth. AND I ſay that few Words will ſuffice to make a Man of Senſe be underſtood; nay, he has no Occaſion for Words at all, to make himſelf intelligible; when he pleaſes, he can make his Thoughts be legible in his Countenance: Sometimes his very Silence ſpeaks, and is more ſignificant to an Underſtanding Man, than a Multitude of Words are to a Fool.

Don

Don And. THOSE Truths, which it concerns us moſt eſſentially to know, are never diſcovered to us but by Halves.

Auth. TRUE; and yet by that half Diſcovery, a fine Underſtanding will eaſily apprehend and fathom the Remainder.

Don And. 'TWAS indeed ſuch a fine penetrating Judgment that preſerved our *Amphion* of *Arragon* *, who being perſecuted by his Countrymen, that were ſecretly conſpiring his Ruin, wiſely and ſeaſonably withdrew himſelf to an illuſtrious † Nation, which joyfully received him.

Auth. WHAT a dexterous Ability accompanies Merit! what numberleſs Expedients a delicate Capacity will find out! eſpecially when they both meet in ſo eminent a Degree, as they did in that admirable Genius.

Don And. IN the Age we live in, to ſpeak Truth, or to Romance, is almoſt the ſame Thing.

Auth. So that a Man dares not be ſincere, leſt he ſhould be reckoned a Fool: All he can do, is to give a dark, remote Hint at Truth, and that too with much Art and Circumſpection.

Don And. PEOPLE do practiſe thoſe Reſerves and Diſtances, eſpecially to great Men, whom they are forced to ſooth with extreme Tenderneſs and Delicacy for their own Sakes.

Auth. AND yet it is the great Mens moſt eſſential Intereſt to be fully and exactly informed of the Truth: For upon the Knowledge or Ignorance of that, their Safety or Ruin often depends.

Don And. BE that as it will, Truth in theſe Days is like a Chriſtian Virgin or Nun, who having a ſingular Modeſty, as well as Beauty, never appears without a Veil.

Auth.

* *Antonio Perez*, of whom *Gracian* makes mention in his *Arte de Ingenio*.

† The *French*.

Auth. IT ſo much the more concerns Princes and great Men to ſearch out and diſcover Truth themſelves, ſince the World is ſo much afraid to unveil it to them. They are generally diſcerning enough to find out a Snare or a Plot laid againſt them, and to preſerve themſelves from it. Let them then make uſe of their diſcerning Faculty, to diſcover Truth through the Veil ſhe is covered with; for, in ſhort, ſome or other will always give them ſufficient Hints and Intimations to know it by, if they will be but mindful and attentive.

Don And. BUT to ſpeak in general, the great Men apart, Sincerity is become exceeding politick and reſerved: Every ſtep ſhe takes, ſhe is afraid of tripping upon ſome Stumbling-block or other. If it be a Fool ſhe has to do with, her Fear either makes her entirely hold her Tongue, or baſely reſign her Cauſe to Flattery.

Auth. AND how does ſhe demean her ſelf towards a Perſon of Underſtanding?

Don And. EVEN with him too ſhe cannot uſe too much Caution and Addreſs.

Auth. It is certain a Man of Senſe, how reaſonable ſoever he may be in other Reſpects, yet does not like that we ſhould openly take upon us to undeceive him of an Error, or bluntly to convince him of his Miſtakes. The Way is to point out his Error in ſuch a delicate Manner, that he may perceive it without Diſpleaſure, and may have Room to aſcribe the Glory of the Diſcovery to himſelf.

Don And. A CONVERSATION between two ſuch curious underſtanding Perſons, muſt needs afford a very diverting Entertainment. The one is to ſpeak but Half a Word, and yet the other is to fathom the very Bottom of his Meaning. How pleaſant it is to obſerve that ſcrupulous Reſervedneſs on the one Side, which ſpeaks but juſt ſo much as will preciſely ſerve to make him intelligible to his ſagacious

ſagacious Companion; and that piercing Subtlety on the other Side, which penetrates into what the other conceals! The one ſlightly glances upon the Point in Queſtion, and the other pierces into it through all the Clouds that intercept him.

Auth. It behoves us to make proper and uſeful Reflexions upon the Nature of Things, that are thus inſinuated to us. If they be in our Favour, inſtead of finiſhing our own Panegyrick upon the Sketch, that is ſo repreſented to us, we ſhould check and reſtrain our too great Proneneſs to believe what flatters our Vanity. If on the other Hand the Things hinted at be to our Diſadvantage, then we ought in ſome Meaſure to be credulous, and ready to believe them. The ſubtle Flatterer himſelf is perſuaded, that the ſagacious Hearer will let his Inſinuation paſs, as if he did not apprehend it: Moreover a Compliment has always more in it than is ſtrictly true, be it never ſo briefly couched up by the artful Author of it. Beſides, it is a weak and ridiculous Thing for a Man to ſeem to underſtand a Piece of Flattery, when it is ſo finely wrapt up and concealed.

Don And. I'm not at all of your Opinion in regard to Things ſpoken to our Diſadvantage. For at that Rate your fine Underſtanding may ſometimes in a ſingle Word, or even in a Geſture find a ſpecious Proſpect of melancholy Conſiderations.

Auth. How melancholy ſoever you may reckon thoſe inſtructive Reflections, it is abſolutely neceſſary that we make them. And it were happy for us, if they were proportionable to the Inſtruction comprized in one ſingle Word, when it is the Word of a diſcreet and intelligent Perſon. A World of Matter is comprehended, as it were, in a Point, becauſe it is always a very delicate and tickliſh Affair to remonſtrate with People of ſome certain Diſpoſitions.

Don

Don And. METHINKS when People undertake to reprove us with all this Refinement and Subtlety, we ſeldom look upon the Things as told us. It is unnatural to take Pains to believe a Thing that diſpleaſes us, and much more ſo, to make it our Buſineſs to amplify and expound it in all its ungrateful Meanings. To make us underſtand a Thing that pleaſes and flatters us, does not require much Art; one ſingle Word will lead us into a fruitful Field of pleaſing Reflexions upon our ſelves. But to make us apprehend a Thing, that muſt humble and mortify us, all *Demoſthenes*'s Eloquence is inſufficient.

Auth. I CARRY the Matter farther yet, and add, that *the fine Underſtanding* muſt ſometimes even divine People's Meaning; for there are ſome Perſons that have, as it were, a Seal upon their Minds, where all their Sentiments are ſhut up till they periſh.

Don And. VERY well; and what would you have a Man do in that Caſe? Becauſe a ſkilful Phyſician can tell a ſick Man's Pulſe by his Reſpiration; muſt we be ſo profoundly metaphyſical too, as to judge of People's Hearts by the Manner of their Breathing?

Auth. LET it be done which Way it will, theſe Sigalio's are generally ſeen into and diſcovered at laſt, and the Diſcovery is attended with advantagious Conſequences.

Don And. BUT it is attended with much greater Difficulties: For it is neceſſary that our Sagacity be at leaſt equal to the prodigious Caution they make uſe of in meaſuring out every Word they ſpeak. Beſides, I rather take theſe myſterious Men, whom you call Sigalio's, to be ſo many *Sphinx's*, that ſpeak altogether in Riddles and Ænigma's; and if we happen to miſconſtrue their myſterious, oracular Language, ſuch a Miſtake may be of very bad Conſequence.

Conſequence. We are not all *OEdipus's*, that we ſhould be able to divine their true Meaning in ſuch a Caſe; fabulous Hiſtory mentions but one, and even he could not expound *Sphinx*'s Ænigma, without Aſſiſtance.

Auth. AFTER all, it is not ſo difficult to underſtand People as you imagine.

Don And. IT is however very difficult to underſtand our ſelves.

Auth. THERE is no Man living ſo ſimple, but he has a certain Stock of Malice in him.

Don And. AND let him be as ſimple and harmleſs as he will in his own Behaviour, he will yet be cenſorious upon other People's.

Auth. WE can diſcern a Mote in our Neighbour's Eye.

Don And. AND yet over-look a Beam in our own.

Auth. HOWEVER, the firſt Knowledge we ought to acquire is that of our ſelves.

Don And. BUT if a Man does not apply himſelf to it with an uninterrupted Diligence, he will always be unacquainted with himſelf in ſome Reſpect or other. That Axiom, *Know thy ſelf*, is ſoon ſaid, but not ſo ſoon attained to.

Auth. A PHILOSOPHER was ranked among the ſeven Sages for pronouncing the Words.

Don And. BUT no Body yet, that I know of, has obtained that Honour for putting them in Practice. How many Men are extremely knowing in what concerns others, and yet wretchedly ignorant of what concerns themſelves. They ſhall reaſon upon a Thouſand Things, which they might blamelefly be unacquainted with, and yet never think upon ſuch Things, as it moſt highly concerns them to know. Let them learn to forget the one, and to ſtudy the other.

Auth.

Auth. But is there any thing in the World more blameable than Idleneſs?

Don And. Yes; the vain Curioſity of thoſe Perſons I ſpeak of.

Auth. Alas! how barren are the Labours of Mankind! what an Emptineſs there is in mortal Things!

Don And. But let us return from this ſhort Digreſſion, if it be one, to your *fine Underſtanding.* He divides Mankind into two Species, or general Characters; the one conſiſts of them who naturally ſpeak little, and the other of them who talk a great deal: The former are always reſerved in their Behaviour, and ſparing of their Words; and the latter are always outwardly frank, and profuſe of their Words. Thoſe are more apt to extenuate Things, and theſe to aggravate them. Now the Nicety is to know how to retrench and lop off all the redundant Gloſſes of the latter, and to comment and paraphraſe upon the former.

Auth. It was ſaid by ſome of the Antients, that Men for the moſt part reſemble Rivers, of which ſome receive what others diſcharge, and the moſt calm and ſerene are generally the deepeſt. It is eaſy to apply this Metaphor to our preſent Purpoſe.

Don And. There are various Circumſtances in Things, that will of Neceſſity puzzle and perplex the moſt penetrating Judgment: For Example, when a Man entertains us with a Relation of his own Affairs, what Standard can we poſſibly have to take an exact Meaſure of the Truth by? So natural is it for a Perſon intereſted in an Affair, either to be biaſſed and flattered himſelf, or elſe to endeavour to impoſe upon others. His Intereſt alone makes us ſuſpect him, and that Suſpicion keeps us in a State of Perplexity and Suſpence.

Auth.

Auth. MENS Words too are more or leſs ambiguous and myſterious, according to the Nature of the Things they diſcourſe of.

Don And. THEY are ſo; and your *fine Underſtanding* had need bring all his Attention and Penetration along with him: For many Artiſts are miſtaken for want of ſeeing the Inſide of the Cards.

Auth. ENOUGH upon this Subject. You are going to work upon your Hiſtory *of antient Saragoſſa*, a Hiſtory ſo much deſired by the learned World, and ſo repleniſhed already with the moſt exquiſite Erudition. I for my Part will go and reſume my Philoſophy *Del Varon Atento.*

CHAP. IX.

We ought not to be always in a merry Strain.

WISE Men, methinks, aſcribe too much to Gravity, and our Superiors too much affect a ſolemn and venerable Accent; the Medium between both Extremes is a becoming Chearfulneſs and Affability. All Perſons of good Senſe commonly keep to this Medium, neither ſinking into a gloomy Gravity, nor riſing into a Mercurial Levity; the middle Way is now and then to be chearful and gay to a moderate Degree. As to Pleaſantry and Mirth, there is an abſolute Neceſſity to ſet them their Bounds and Reſtrictions. I do not know how we can define that Perſon, who ſets none to them. In my Judgment, he that is always upon the merry Pin, is not truly and properly Man. Yet there are infinite Numbers of this Stamp, that are perpetually in a high Strain of Rallery and Banter, without Change or Intermiſſion. Though every Extravagance in the World has its Party to eſpouſe it, yet I cannot imagine how this came to have ſuch a Number of Partizans: For of all the

moſt egregious Follies in Life, is there any ſo inſipid and abſurd, as a perpetual Affectation of Banter and Ridicule?

UNDOUBTEDLY there are proper Seaſons for a Man to be gay, and to divert himſelf with innocent Rallery and Mirth; but methinks the major Part of our Time ought to be ſpent in rational and ſerious Employments. In ſhort, Pleaſantry and Jeſting being only the Seaſoning, as it were, of Converſation, ought to be regulated and proportioned as that is in our Sauces and Entertainments: The Uſe of it ſhould be moderate, pertinent, agreeable to good Taſte, and ſuitable to the Company. For after all, to rally a Perſon, is treating him as our Inferior, or at beſt as our Equal; it is by no Means a Mark of our Reſpect or Eſteem.

AND how ſhall we be able to know, when theſe perpetual Jeſters ſpeak ſincerely? That is a Point which we can never be well aſſured of. For my Part, therefore, I ſhould place this Species of Gentlemen upon a Level with Liars, and ſhould open my ſelf juſt as much to the one, as to the other. The Apprehenſion of the one's requiting me with Banter, and the other with Lies, has the ſame Influence upon me, which is to make me ſuſpect them both equally, and never put an unneceſſary Confidence in either. Theſe profeſſed Jeſters generally ſpeak without Thought or Conſideration, which is a great Sign they want Underſtanding, ſince the one is the certain Effect of the other. But if they pretend to have Underſtanding, they are ſo much the more inexcuſable for not making uſe of it by reflecting upon their own extravagant Folly. I know but one Circumſtance wherein they differ from the poor Wretches in * *Bethlehem*'s Hoſpital; which is, that thoſe are by Choice,

* A Mad-Houſe.

Choice, what theſe are againſt their Wills. Levity of Mind produces in the one the ſame Effect, as the Loſs of Reaſon does in the other: The Behaviour of thoſe is an exact Copy of the Behaviour of theſe; they both live only to divert Mankind, the former with Deſign, and the latter without it.

We now come to another Species of merry Gentlemen (if they deſerve that Title) who take upon them to ſcoff at all Mankind. Theſe are Monſters of Society that a Man would ſhun, as he would *Æſop*'s Beaſt, which uſed to expreſs his Careſſes by kicking, and his Flattery by biting. Before they have heard half of what a Man has to ſay, they begin to ſneer and to commend it with an inſufferable Air of Scorn and Deriſion. And this Sort of Behaviour they call Diverſion and Gaiety. But they cannot deceive the World in that Reſpect, for they ſufficiently diſcover and betray themſelves by their own Deportment. Their contemptuous Silence, ſupercilious Aſpect, and inſolent Manner of Speaking evidently demonſtrate how much they are enamoured of themſelves, that they can ſee no Merit but in their own Perſons, and that they are ſo ſufficient and infallible in their own Conceits, that they fancy they have a Right to pronounce deciſively upon all Subjects beyond Contradiction or Appeal. Unhappy that Man, who dares diſguſt one of theſe Creatures by having the Aſſurance to contradict or thwart his imperious, corroſive Humour. Immediately his Spleen riſes, his Gall boils up, he uſes the bittereſt Invectives and the moſt opprobious Language againſt the Offender, whoever he be, though it were the civileſt Perſon living, or one of his beſt and deareſt Friends. Theſe are your virulent Tempers, that are always ready to ſacrifice any Thing in the World to a ſatyrical Repartee, which was looked

upon as deteſtable in Converſation by the *Roman* Orator.

It is true indeed this Species of Satyriſts does acquire a Sort of Reputation; but it is ſuch a one as makes them hated and avoided for their malignant Humours. Nor is this all; if they do ſometimes find an immediate inward Satisfaction from a well-darted Repartee, that ill-natured Satisfaction is but of a ſhort Continuance, and often attended with a long Repentance. Whilſt they are in a numerous Company, they may perhaps have the Laugh on their Side, moſt People being afraid to diſoblige them, and at the ſame Time apt enough to laugh at their Neighbour's Coſt. But theſe forced and tranſient laughs often prove to theſe Gentlemen the plentiful Sources of bitter Tears, which they conceal from the World, and communicate to no body. Yet all theſe ſharp inſtructive Leſſons do not reform them; they ſtill retain their violent Itch to gall and offend, and their Averſion to oblige. Such is the crooked, inflexible Turn of their natural Tempers.

An exceſſive Inclination to Rallery, whether malicious or jocoſe, is commonly a Sign of a Slight, ſuperficial Underſtanding. Even an inoffenſive Pleaſantry, that keeps no Bounds, is in Perſons of Rank and Condition more particularly blameable than in other People. I am ſenſible it ſometimes makes them popular among the vulgar Sort, who look upon this Fault as a Teſtimony of their Condeſcenſion and Affability. But yet in Spight of their Rank and Superiority, a too facetious Familiarity will expoſe them to the Hazard of loſing that Reſpect, which they wiſh to preſerve. Their ludicrous Deportment authorizes the like in others, and gives them a kind of Right to Repriſals. If they will be venting their Jeſts at every Turn, they muſt expect it will be their own to hear them ſome-

ſometimes, whether they be pleaſed with them or not.

Some Perſons indeed are born with a wonderful Talent at true Humour and Pleaſantry. If this be chaſtized and reſtrained by Diſcretion, it is then ſo far from being a Fault, that it is an excellent and valuable Endowment. Fine Strokes of true delicate Humour become People of any Rank or Quality whatſoever; but to indulge a ludicrous jocoſe Vein pepetually, and beyond all Bounds, what is it but acting the Part of a Buffoon, that is hired to divert Company, and to make them laugh? This is a Part that is ſuitable to none but a Paraſite, who pays for his Entertainment with ſuch deſpicable Coin. It is irregular even in a Comedy to have a *Davus* continually jeſting; to be throwing in his facetious Sentences in the midſt of a Father's grave Admonition to his Son. Then what is it for one, that is no *Davus*, to be mingling his unſeaſonable Jeſts in a ſerious Converſation? It is abſurd, and will always be thought impertinent by every Man of ſober Underſtanding.

There is another Sort of People that will needs be witty in Spight of Nature. Theſe are ſure of ſucceeding ſo far as to make themſelves ridiculous and contemptible. If a Man does happen to laugh, when theſe are pretending to jeſt, it is the Silline ſs of the Wretches that makes him laugh. Affectation is always diſagreeable, but it is more particularly ſo in Wit and Humour, becauſe it is then flat and inſipid to the laſt Degree. The unnatural Pretender to Humour has this Piece of Fortune peculiar to himſelf, that he is ſure of hitting a Mark directly oppoſite to what he aims at; he purpoſes to make himſelf agreeable at any Rate, and he renders himſelf moſt egregiouſly diſagreeable and ridiculous.

But there is yet another Species of true genuine Humour; I mean that of your plain unaffected Men, that have a certain Sheer-wit inimitably beautiful: For there is a great Difference between a poliſhed refined Humour, and this natural Sheer-wit, that I am ſpeaking of. The one appears openly for what it is, an intended Exerciſe of a witty Talent in order to divert the Company, and be diverted. The other comes upon us unexpectedly, without any apparent Deſign or Premeditation, and therefore always brings along with it the Pleaſure of a Surprize. The moſt grave Man in the World may now and then act this unaffected Part, if he has a Genius for it. He may bring in, as if it were by Chance, a few of theſe genuine humorous Turns, which immediately delight the Company without giving the leaſt Offence, and are more agreeable than the fineſt *Athenian* Wit, if they be not rather the Quinteſſence of it. This natural Humour will bring a Man off, where the moſt refined and ſprightly Wit would be at a Loſs, and will compenſate a thouſand little Slips and Improprieties, which the Company are willing to overlook in his Favour. In ſhort the one Sort underſtands Rallery, and the other does not, as it is generally practiſed; as for this unſtudied genuine Sheer-wit, that is ſhot at Random, as it were, it very rarely offends any Body; for a Man would be aſhamed to take any thing ill, which ſeems rather to fall from an undeſigning Man, than to be ſpoken on Purpoſe.

But there are ſome Perſons of ſuch a particular Caſt, that they hate all Kinds of Pleaſantneſs and Humour: Grave, compoſed Men, always ſerious and ſedate, in whom one would think Nature had forgot to implant the Faculty of Laughing. Such a perpetual Sedateneſs and unalterable Gravity, is apt to make us melancholy. Yet I muſt own the World

World is more inclined to Reſpect, than to blame theſe *Cato*'s, becauſe they are generally Perſons of Senſe and Diſcretion: Therefore I ſhall make no Compariſon between their Temper, and the other, which is diametrically oppoſite to it. Their conſtant Seriouſneſs and Gravity is infinitely preferable to the perpetual Fooleries of thoſe, that are always in a merry Strain; the latter, without repeating their other Faults, which we have mentioned already, are more cloying and tireſome than the former. But the principal Reaſon why we ſhould abhor all profeſſed Jeſters, is, that by accuſtoming themſelves to turn every Thing into Banter, they go jeſting and bantering even to their Graves. Men generally dye as they live. *Seneca* by affecting witty Turns all his Life-time could not forbear making them, even when he was dying.

In Regard to what we call Buffoonry, I ſhall only ſay in two Words, that no reaſonable Man whatſoever will allow himſelf to practiſe it; and as to thoſe Perſons that approve of it in others, either they do not conſider what they do, or they deſerve to be referred to the Proverb; *Every body loves his own Likeneſs.* One ſingle Inſtance of Buffoonry would have been ſufficient to ruin any Man's Credit with the Catholick King *Ferdinandus.*

CHAP. X.

The Man of good Choice.

SOCRATES thought that there was not a Man living, in his Time, who truly underſtood any thing; and if the preſent Age affords any ſuch Man, it is certainly he, who knows in all Caſes how to make a prudent Choice: For properly ſpeaking, there is nothing invented now; for which Reaſon all Novelties, eſpecially in fundamental and

and eſſential Things, are juſtly ſuſpected. We are, as I may ſay, in the old Age of Time: The golden Age, which is paſt ſo many Centuries ago, was the Time for Invention; the ſucceeding Ages have made Additions and Improvements, and the preſent is only the Echo, as it were, whoſe principal Buſineſs is Repetition. The only Science for the future is, if I may uſe that Expreſſion, the Science of Choice; and yet it is almoſt as rare and uncommon, as it is requiſite and neceſſary. We ſee Men enow, that have Wit, Induſtry, Capacity and Experience, and yet notwithſtanding all that, are conſtantly at a Loſs when they come to fix their Choice in any Matter whatſoever. It is their untoward Fate, always to hit upon the wrong, to reſolve upon the bad, and to purſue it, whether in Point of Buſineſs, or Literature. How ſhould they ſucceed? They ſtumble at the very Threſhold, they ſet out upon a wrong Principle; it is to little Purpoſe they toil and labour afterwards; their Succeſs will at beſt only reſemble that Man's, who takes a bad Cauſe in Hand, and loſes it only for the Reputation of having made a good Defence.

This Wiſdom in chooſing is an eſſential Point in all the ſeveral Stations and Conditions of human Life, every one of them requires it according to its Rank and Degree; upon this depend the Progreſs of our Improvement in all Affairs, the good, the better, the perfect, and the excellent; it is this which keeps the right End in View, and by uſing proper Means ſecures a happy Event. When a Man is deſtitute of this Wiſdom, no Pains or Induſtry will ſupply the Defect; either he abſolutely miſcarries, or at leaſt does not finiſh his Courſe with Honour. By what Art is it that ſo many Sovereigns have governed their reſpective Kingdoms with Succeſs? Only by this Art and Diſcretion in chooſing [illegible] es

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for having made a wiſe Choice of great Men for the Cabinet and the Field, for having out of the various Opinions of their Council prudently ſelected and determined upon that, which was moſt for their Purpoſe and Advantage. For one ſingle falſe Step in Matter of Government draws after it a Train of the moſt fatal Conſequences; as on the other Hand one ſingle Deſign well laid, and well conducted, may raiſe a Kingdom to an immortal Reputation. Some Princes have been miſtaken in the Choice of their Enterprizes, others in the Choice of their Miniſters; and theſe Miſtakes have made their Crowns totter, and ſometimes fall from their Heads.

THERE are ſome certain Profeſſions in the World, whoſe principal Employment conſiſts in a perpetual chooſing: Thoſe, particularly, are of this Kind, whoſe Aim is both to delight and inſtruct. The Orator, therefore, makes choice of a plauſible Subject preferably to any other; the Hiſtorian contrives to make Pleaſure and Profit always inſeparable. The Philoſopher adorns his ſententious Maxims with beautiful Language. And every one of them, if he will make a certain Choice, muſt conſult the general Taſte of the Age: That univerſal, prevailing Taſte, muſt be their Standard; they muſt prefer that not only to their own, but to the Judgments of the moſt able Men of their Profeſſion: For what is any particular Opinion in Oppoſition to the publick Vogue? The Perſon, who of all the Gentlemen in *Spain* was one of the beſt Choice and fineſt Taſte, uſed to ſay upon this Subject, that when ever he gave an Entertainment, he would conſult the Taſte and Pleaſure of his Company, and not his own Humour, or his Clerk of the Kitchen's.

WHAT does it avail to have an Orator charmed with his own Harangue, if it does not ſuit the Taſte

Taſte of his Audience, for whom it was prepared? It is Eloquence loſt and thrown away. He himſelf perhaps has been ſecretly delighted with a fine, ſubtle Piece of Reaſoning, which he had worked up with ſome curious Turns and elaborate Expreſſions; but it happens that his Hearers, not at all affected with this, beſtow their Applauſe upon a plain, unſtudied Simile.

THIS Talent at chooſing is requiſite even in mechanick Arts, as well as in the liberal Sciences. I have ſeen two rival Artificers ſtriving for the petty Glory of their Trade with great Warmth and Emulation. One of them worked with the greateſt Delicacy imaginable, and let nothing go out of his Hands but what was a Maſter-piece in its Kind; and yet ſeldom any of his Works pleas'd. The other, without attaining to the Delicacy and Perfection of his Rival, was nevertheleſs much more in Vogue, and his Pieces, though not ſo well finiſhed, gave more Satisfaction. Now how came this ſecond to gain the Preference from the firſt? Becauſe the ſecond excelled in the Art of chooſing.

FARTHER; this Talent at making a judicious Choice, neceſſarily ſuppoſes a Man to be born with a natural Fund of good Taſte. But how ſhall a Man know whether he has this Fund in Nature, or not? By comparing himſelf with ſuch as are generally eſteemed to have it. And if upon making that Compariſon judiciouſly, he finds an exact Correſpondence between his Taſte and theirs, then he may aſſure himſelf Succeſs. He is then freed from a Thouſand arbitrary Notions, that perplex a Man much more than they aſſiſt him; without having recourſe to ſuch a Variety of Opinions, he may reaſonably promiſe himſelf a happy Choice; the good Taſte of others, which he finds agrees and correſponds with his own, is a Security for it; the ſame Thing, which pleaſes his Taſte in them, will

will as certainly pleaſe theirs in him. By this Rule a Man never fails to make a good Choice; and if he happens to ſucceed without it, it is a mere Chance, which will hardly come to paſs a ſecond Time.

A BAD Taſte ſpoils every thing in the World, as a bad Stomach corrupts the beſt Victuals. Some People's Taſte is ſo ſtrangely vicious, that they nauſeate every Thing that is good, and pick out the Traſh of all they read or hear, as moſt agreeable to their Palates. If they meet with any poor Reaſoning, or weak Argument upon a Subject, that they will be ſure to remark and treaſure up, that they may adopt it for their own upon Occaſion. If an Author of Merit lets but one Impertinence ſlip from his Pen, that is the only Thing theſe Perſons will retain. Two living Repreſentations of a good and bad Taſte, are the Bee and the Fly in the ſame Garden; the one ſticking to the Odour of the Flowers, and the other to the Dirt and Dung. But the worſt of all is, when theſe People of bad Taſte have but little Senſe too; then their Ignorance or Obſtinacy makes them communicate their Diſtemper to other People: They will needs have their Opinion ſet up as a Rule and Standard for others to judge by; and ſuch ridiculous Admirers are they of themſelves (as well as ſorry, pitiful Authors) that they ſhall even be aſtoniſhed at you, if you ſcruple to make them your Models and Patterns. There are others, that reſemble theſe in ſome Reſpects only, and have a kind of two-fold or mixt Taſte. In ſome Things their Taſte is vicious and depraved, and in other Things excellently good. But commonly when the Root is bad, all the Fruit that proceeds from it, has a Smack of its Corruption.

A JUDGMENT in chooſing, ſuppoſes likewiſe a perfect Knowledge of all the Circumſtances of an Affair,

Affair, which make it really convenient or inconvenient. A man that makes a good Choice, conſiders his Object thoroughly, with all its appendant Circumſtances, and in every Point of View: He is not ſatisfied with Excellence alone, it muſt be attended with Convenience too. For we find in a Thouſand Inſtances, that the Things, which are in themſelves the moſt valuable, are often the leaſt convenient. But when Excellence and Convenience go together, from that Concurrence a Man expects a compleat Succeſs. In order to make a true Judgment of Conveniency, he muſt conſider Times, Places, and the Characters of Perſons; and if all theſe relative Circumſtances ſquare and agree with the known Goodneſs of the Thing, then a Man is ſure he makes a good Choice.

After all, whatever Diſpoſitions and Qualities a Man may have towards the making of him an able Man in this Science of Choice, yet he will never be one effectually, ſo long as he is influenced by any Paſſion, any Prejudice of Mind, or Inclination of Heart. It is Reaſon's Office to hold the Ballance even; and there is nothing in the World turns the Scale ſo much as a Prepoſſeſſion of any kind whatſoever. A prejudiced Judgment has no Regard to what is really good in it ſelf, or what is actually expedient; it is altogether governed and determined by the Objects of its Hatred or Affection. But ſuch a Man's Paſſion is attended with a ſpeedy Puniſhment; his Succeſs is as bad as the Meaſures he purſued.

Let us proceed to other Subjects of our Choice; the firſt is that of our Vocation or Condition of Life: This is a Point we ought to conſider with the matureſt Deliberation, in order to fix once for ever. If we make a right Choice in this, we are happy for the reſt of our Lives; if we make a wrong one, the whole Period of our Days will be full

full of Complaints; the Miſtake is irreparable; and this Choice, upon which the Happineſs or Unhappineſs of our Life depends, is made—When? In our mature Years? No; when we have neither Judgment nor Experience, when we ſcarce know the Reaſons *pro* or *con*, why we take this Reſolution rather than another. Beſides, in what Manner do we make our Choice? Generally without conſulting or hearing ſuch Perſons, as might direct us in ſo nice a Point by their Wiſdom and Experience. After the Choice of a Man's Condition, methinks that of his Friends is the moſt important. We take care how we chooſe our Servants, though they are only for our Attendance, and not for our Confidence in the weighty Concerns of Life. How much greater Reaſon have we to be curious in the Choice of our Friends? To them we communicate our Affairs, and unboſom our inmoſt Secrets, and are obliged on many Occaſions to make uſe of their Aſſiſtance: What Dangers do we run, then, if we have linked our ſelves with Confidents, without a thorough Knowledge of them before-hand? But I ſhall not enlage upon this Subject, which ſo many famous Authors have treated of already.

But would it not be a great Happineſs, if Parents could have the chooſing of their Children too? I am not of that Opinion: For the greateſt Part of Fathers are ſo void of Reaſon, that they would often adopt the moſt unworthy. It is a Happineſs that Providence prevents the Choice of theſe blind Creatures, ſince the very Children that are born good, are ſpoiled by their Examples and Neglect. For there are infinite Numbers of People that abuſe the Gifts of Nature, as well as the Favours of Fortune.

Lastly, where there is no Choice, there can be no Merit nor Glory. A Choice implies two Things, the Liberty of chooſing, and the Art of

chooſing well. To proceed or conduct one's ſelf without Choice, is a Sort of playing at Hazard, or catching at Things in the dark. Whoever then is deſtitute of this Science of Choice, or Skill in chooſing, if he would preſerve himſelf from Errors and Miſcarriages, let him ſupply the Defect by the Counſels and Examples of other Perſons.

CHAP. XI.

Not to make one's ſelf too cheap.

'TIS the Fate of the beſt Things to loſe their Value by being too frequently uſed. At firſt we covet them for their Excellence, and reliſh them with Pleaſure; but we repeat our Viſits too often; our Fondneſs is all over, they are now become familiar to us, and common.

As ſoon as the Bloom of Rarity is worn off, the extraordinary ſinks into a Level with the ordinary, and at laſt incurs our Indifference or Contempt. It is an odd Fatality this, that the Diſeſteem of the moſt valuable Things ſhould in a great Meaſure proceed even from their Excellence. For, if in Reality they had only been common, we ſhould not have purſued them ſo eagerly, nor cloyed our ſelves with them ſo much. Thus it is with Merit in any Kind whatſoever: It wears away and declines, in Proportion as it is uſed, without Oeconomy and Management. The very Source of its Elevation becomes the Cauſe of its Decay. It is neceſſary it ſhould appear in order to be diſtinguiſhed; it has appeared ſeaſonably, and is diſtinguiſhed: But thence forward it appears too much, it is more and more laviſh of it ſelf every Day; alas! its Date is expired, it will quickly ceaſe to aſtoniſh us, and be reduced to a common Rank.

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THE ſame Thing may be ſaid of that Intereſt and Sway, which proceeds from Merit; they decline by little and little, and are ſometimes irrecoverably ſpent and loſt by too much Exerciſe. It is, I confeſs, a prodigious Fault to be uſeful no Way; but it is an undeniable one too, for a Man to make himſelf too cheap, and to lend himſelf out indifferently upon all Occaſions.

THERE are ſome Men ſo eminent for their Virtues and Abilities, that they gain the Confidence of a whole City. Every important Affair is referred to their Counſel, and recommended to their Intereſt, and the Parties promiſe themſelves they will immediately engage in it. Theſe Gentlemen, for their own Sakes, never intermeddle in Things of their own Accord, much leſs in Affairs which they have not been entruſted with; but when another's Intereſt requires their Knowledge, and challenges their Aſſiſtance, this is ſuch a Call, as they think they ought not to withſtand. Certainly the Principle of ſuch a Conduct as this, is ſo far from being blameable, that it is highly commendable; it is a Generoſity that cannot be ſufficiently eſteemed. So that what they loſe on one Side, if the Succeſs does not anſwer their Expectation, they gain and make up on the other. For in ſhort we are always obliged and indebted to them for their generous Endeavours; they engaged to lend us their Aſſiſtance, not to aſſure us Succeſs, which was not in their Power: Yet even this Generoſity, conſtantly diſpoſed and ready to do good Offices, ought not to be practiſed without ſome Degree of Huſbandry and Management. The very Nature of the Things themſelves, in which we are deſired to engage, preſcribes us Bounds, not to mention many other Reaſons, which occur to us in Proportion as the Matters are laid open and diſcloſed. It requires more Diſcretion than People imagine

for a Man not to refuſe his Intereſt, and yet to maintain it. But let us conſider another Character, that widely differs from this; there is a Sort of voluntary Tax or Impoſition, which People on certain Occaſions lay upon themſelves; I mean the lending of their rich Furniture upon all Spectacles and Shews; which for want of being duly managed and taken care of, are ſpoiled, grow uſeleſs, and loſe their Value and Eſteem. This Allegory gives us a true Picture of thoſe Perſons that lend themſelves out to all the World, till, in ſhort, their Service is deſpiſed. Being Friends and humble Servants to all Mankind, they invite every Body to make trial of their Zeal, and being Enemies to their own Quiet and Repoſe, they would rather go without Meat and Drink, than be out of Action and Intrigue; to commit an Affair into their Hands, is making them a moſt agreeable Preſent; the happieſt Day for them, and the moſt unhappy for any Body elſe, is that in which they have not had one Moment to themſelves. But as theſe Buſy-bodies intermeddle in every thing, and take upon them the Management of our Affairs without Ceremony, they ſometimes go farther into them than we would have them, and being raſh as well as indiſcreet, they plunge themſelves into terrible Difficulties; and whether they ſtick faſt, or bring themſelves out, they are ſure of gaining this Point, to have the World talk of them and their Exploits, that is, in plain *Engliſh*, to be merry at their Expence.

Certainly, if we had nothing elſe to endure from theſe People, but the Vexation of meeting them in all Companies, that would be ſufficient to try our Patience: But to hear them always haranguing upon their own Atchievements, is a Plague, that renders them inſupportable: Beſides, they are not always ſucceſsful, let their Intereſt or Abilities

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be never ſo great: Their obtruding themſelves upon all Companies, muſt of Neceſſity make them be thought troubleſome, and their meddling in ſo many different Affairs, muſt needs make them often miſcarry. And what becomes of them then? They have pretended to be ſufficient for all Things, and they are now counted fit for nothing; they have ſet up for pleaſing the Taſte of all Mankind, and they are no longer capable of pleaſing any Body's.

But theſe Turns and Changes may be traced ſometimes to other Cauſes, as Envy and Hatred for Example, which a too publick and conſpicuous Merit can never eſcape: In Proportion as we are ambitious to raiſe and improve this, thoſe two Rivals conſpire to pull it down. All ſuch as are of the ſame Rank with a Perſon of Merit, are peeked and offended at the ſeeming Inequality, which they are brought to by his Ambition of Diſtinction. He appears to their Eyes like a Stone in a fine Building out of its Place; it is indeed finely cut, but nevertheleſs it offends the Sight, becauſe of its jutting too much out. Thus whoever aims too openly at being much eſteemed, will ſooner or latter come to be leſs ſo than he deſerves. He takes the infallible Way to tumble down upon a Level with the common Sort; nay, ſuch implacable Things are Malice and Jealouſy, that they will think it a Favour to treat him no worſe.

To acquire a Reputation in the World, and to maintain the Poſſeſſion of it, requires a nice and delicate Management; ſo backward are Men in giving their Aſſent to another's Fame, and ſo forward to withdraw it, ſo loath to eſteem, and ſo prone to deſpiſe. Now the Oeconomy, which a Man ſhould uſe in this Caſe, is to give only an Eſſay, as it were, of his Worth; the reſt he ſhould leave to others; it is their Buſineſs to require farther Proofs, and when they do, he has them to

produce; but these too he should produce with the same Caution and Reserve that he used before when he gave his first Essays.

There are two other Species of Persons, that are ambitious to make a Figure and Appearance; the first is of those Women that covet to be distinguished for so frivolous a Merit as that of Beauty. But not to mention the Restraints which Religion and their own Honour lay upon them to keep them from exposing themselves to such Dangers as they run by that Vanity, the World it self sufficiently punishes them for this Affectation. It generally despises them, and forms very disadvantageous Ideas of them, though often undeserved. Yes, even the celebrated *Poppæa*, in regard to Appearances, was as modest and reserved as a *Vestal* Virgin.

The other Species is of those profound Politicians, that entertain you with critical Observations and Refinements upon all News and Occurrences: Their Principles are good, but they are too full of them, since they have so great an Itch to be making Ostentation of them, let them be content with doing it once or twice, after that let them wait till they are desired to repeat them; then instead of being thought troublesome, they will become agreeable. The most delicious Meat in the World is the less grateful to the Palate, if the second Time of serving it up be too near the first; and if that again be quickly succeeded by a third, this delicious Food ceases to be so to him, that is accustomed to it. We should never cloy People's Appetites; the Meat which they have thought exquisite, they will think so again, provided it does not appear too often. This Maxim ought to be observed much more in Things that relate to the Mind, whose Edge and Delicacy may be palled by one single arbitrary Repetition.

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You have reaſoned judiciouſly upon a Subject, and the People have heard you with Admiration; ſtop there, till a certain Interval of Time gives the Air of Novelty to your Principles. When a Man of a ſurprizing Merit huſbands the Appearance of it, and retires for a While, by that Means he makes himſelf be deſired and longed for by all that know him; whereas they would certainly grow weary of hearing him, if he was amongſt them every Day. A prudent Reſervedneſs in expoſing the Beauties of our Minds to View, is as neceſſary to preſerve their Reputation, as Temperance in Eating and Drinking is for the Preſervation of our Health. Reputation is the Life of the Mind, as Health is the Life of the Body.

It is a rare and curious Talent, to know how to makes our ſelves eſteemed, to know how to cover and conceal a Part of our Merit, that we may always have a Reſerve in our Hands to maintain and enhance that Eſteem which is entertained of us. This brings to my Remembrance the following Story: A certain *Indian* had brought out of his own Country a conſiderable Number of fine valuable Pearls, which he carried to an able Jeweller, in order to have them appraiſed: The firſt he produced was ſo beautiful, that it charmed the Jeweller, who was a Judge of them; the ſecond ſurprized him not ſo much, though it was more beautiful; and he was ſtill leſs charmed with the third, though it was more excellent than the other two: In ſhort, his Value for the Jewels ſtill leſſened and abated, though every new Jewel he ſaw, was ſtill more valuable, both for Fineneſs and Faſhion. The *Indian* was ſurprized at this unaccountable Behaviour of the Jeweller's, and could not forbear aſking him the Reaſon of it. It is true, anſwered he, theſe Pearls are exceeding beautiful; but the Number of them is a Diſadvantage to them; by diſplaying

playing ſuch a Variety of them before my Eyes, the Rarity diſappeared to my Imagination, and conſequently the Value.

Let the Man then, who wiſhes to be always eſteemed, huſband and manage his Merit, and not expoſe it too much to View; let him endeavour to grow ſtill more and more perfect and excellent in his Way, yet whatever new Degrees of Perfection he acquires, let him never uſe them profuſely.

CHAP. XII.

To know how to make one's ſelf regretted when out of Place.

The Author's *Letter to one of his Friends.*

DEAR *Laſtanoſa*, if I believed in Fortune, as the vulgar do, I ſhould believe too there were two gates into her Palace, the one very different from the other. I ſhould imagine the one built of Stones whiter than Alabaſter, and the other of Stones as black as Pitch: The one, large and magnificent, preſents to our View the fineſt Work of the moſt exquiſite Artiſts; the other, mean and low, preſents nothing to our View but Darkneſs and Horror. There Eaſe, Glory, and Plenty make their Abode; here dwells Affliction, Shame and Poverty; for which Reaſon the one is called the Gate of Joy, and the other the Gate of Sorrow. All Mankind reſort to this Palace of Fortune, and enter in at one or other of theſe two Gates. But it is obſerved as a general Rule, that whoever goes in at the Gate of Joy comes out at the Gate of Sorrow; and they that go in at the Gate of Sorrow, come out at the Gate of Joy.

Yes, dear *Laſtanoſa*, the common Fate of the Fortunate is to begin their Career joyfully, and to end

end it at a melancholy Period. Every Thing ſmiles upon them at firſt, and inſults them at laſt: Even the ſincere Applauſes, which they met with in the Infancy of their Grandeur, ſerve only to make their Cataſtrophe the more remarkable. Therefore it is not enough that we have a general Approbation when we enter upon an Employment, the Buſineſs is to quit it with a general Regret. The Men in Place that have the Skill to make themſelves thus regretted, when they reſign it by Choice or otherwiſe, are very few in Number. How many of theſe Stars have you and I ſeen in our Country, whoſe Riſing has been very different from their Setting? In their Morning all the Birds of happy Omen ſaluted them with their charming Notes; at their Setting they heard nothing but doleful Birds, attending their Departure, as far as they could, with lamentable Accents.

TIMANDER is exalted to Day to a Poſt of Conſequence, Applauſes are poured in upon him, either on Account of his Predeceſſor's Retirement or Diſgrace, who was not beloved, or elſe for the Hopes of Favour, which they ridiculouſly promiſe themſelves from *Timander*, though they neither know him, nor are known to him; or laſtly for the Proſpect of the publick Good expected from his Abilities. But does *Timander*'s Intereſt begin to ſink? All the triumphant Rejoycings are at an End? and it would be happy for him, if he could fall without Noiſe, and compound for Silence; but inſtead of that he is loaden with Reproaches and Curſes.

And this is the Condition of all Honours that are, as I may ſay, moveable and precarious. Is an Officer of the Army upon the Liſt for the principal Command? Swarms of Subalterns, either through Hope or Fear, crowd to pay their Adorations to this new Demi-God. And how long do theſe

theſe Homages continue? Juſt ſo long as his Honour and Command, whether the Veneration they ſhewed this General in Favour was real or counterfeit: When once his Office is at an End, he muſt not expect to eſcape the Clamours of a Thouſand Male-contents, that had preſuppoſed his Promotion would not hold out to a ſecond Campaign.

To be turned out of an Employment is, in moſt People's Opinion, the ſame Thing as to be unworthy of it; it is thought to be a formal Degradation, and a merited Diſgrace. And for this Reaſon the Praiſes they were ſo laviſh of at firſt, are turned into Murmurings and Complaints. Yet the Perſon in Queſtion has no Crime laid to his Charge: No Matter for that, the Date of his Employment is out; that is Reaſon enough to condemn him, or at leaſt to abandon him to his ill Fortune.

Thoſe that talk as if they believed in Fortune, ſay, ſhe ſeems to take Pleaſure in receiving People graciouſly at their coming into her Palace, and in uſing them ill when they go out. She then proceeds even to deprive them of their Friends, not only thoſe whoſe Friendſhip ſhe was the Cement of, but thoſe too, whoſe Friendſhip was formed without her Aſſiſtance. Thus the prime Attribute of Fortune is to be extreme in all Things: Exceſſive Joy and Laughter are imprinted on her Countenance, when ſhe declares in our Favour; but no ſooner does ſhe frown upon us, but we are preſented with an Aſpect of hideous Sorrow, and mournful Melancholy. But he that is prepared to ſee her paſs from one Extreme to another without Concern or Diſcompoſure, has the Art of not ceaſing to be happy, though ſhe ceaſes to be propitious.

The higheſt Pitch of Prudence is to make it our prime View and principal Endeavour to finiſh our Race well. Let us overlook the flattering Applauſes

Applauſes of them that clap their Hands at our firſt Appearance upon the Stage, or if we do take Notice of them; let it be only to make us more mindful of deſerving their Regret when we go off. Our main Buſineſs henceforward is to end happily; on that let us have our Eye, without loſing Sight of the Goal. The able Pilot ſteers his Veſſel by the Helm, and not by the Prow; there is his Point, where all his Thoughts center in order to compleat a ſucceſsful Voyage.

Some Perſons are too happy at firſt ſetting out, not to be unhappy in the End; all their Beginnings ſucceed too well, that is their Ruin; the firſt Fruits of their Labours come too cheap to put them upon their Guard in Reſpect to the Conſequences. Have they a Mind to ſuch a Poſt of Honour! all the Avenues that lead to it are immediately open to their Wiſh. Are they deſirous of being introduced into any great Man's Favour? The Way is inſtantly paved and ſmoothed for them, almoſt without their knowing how it was done. Proſperity courts them, and ſeems to run before them, if I may uſe that Expreſſion. But the Race of this happy Species is ſeldom long; what they begun ſo fortunately, they generally end as unfortunately. And the Reaſon is this; too eaſy and proſperous a Beginning dazled their Underſtandings, and hindered them from uſing the neceſſary Precautions againſt the Rocks and Sands that were in their Way. All theſe overhaſty ſhort-lived Proſperities are like Veſſels or Glaſſes, which have their Rims rubbed with a pleaſant Liquor, but ſoon let us find they have bitter Potions contained at the Bottom.

A Model of a good Beginning and happy ending is that wiſe *Roman*, who ſaid, he attained to Honours before he deſired them, and reſigned them, before he was deſired by others. Theſe

two

two Paſſages alone comprehend a perfect Panegyrick. Yet the firſt, in my Opinion, is inferior to the ſecond; becauſe Fortune has a Hand in that; whereas the other is an heroick, finiſhing Stroke of a conſummate Wiſdom. A Fall is the natural Puniſhment of too ardent a Thirſt after Advancement; and when this Reverſe of Fortune comes upon us, we have the additional Mortification of not being lamented. It is glorious on the other Hand to deſcend from an Elevation in good Time, and not ſtay till we are thrown down and ſurvive our Reputation. It is a ſolid Satisfaction to a wiſe Man, that he has quitted his Honours before they deſerted him: What a Pleaſure it is to him, to have prevented them in Time!

A MAN may ſo behave himſelf in his Fortune as to pleaſe even till ſhe forſakes him, and confers her Favours upon new Objects without his having forfeited them by any Demerit. He may order his Conduct in ſuch a Manner as to make himſelf regretted after he has choſen to retire of his own Accord. But let him take Care his Retirement never be the melancholy Effect of ill Succeſs, Diſcontent, a Rupture, or Pique: Theſe Motives diſcover a Weakneſs in him, that is influenced by them; being known to every Body, as they always are, they very much prejudice his Reputation, and lay a Foundation for laſting Troubles.

FARTHER, even amongſt thoſe Heroes, that we may call the eminently fortunate, there are few but what have received ſome Affront, ſome Blemiſh or other from Fortune. Thoſe only ſeem to have been ſpared, whoſe Diſcretion or Circumſtances made them ſtop their Career, before Glory was weary of attending them. But for ſo few that have eſcaped Ship-wrack, how many others have ſunk and periſhed! how many have concluded with ſuch baſe Actions, as have tarniſhed their Memories

Memories for ever! *Hercules*, celebrated for ſo many wonderful Atchievements, at laſt takes it into his Head to ſpin like a Woman, and ſo cuts the Thread of his own Immortality. It is not Pillars, as durable as Braſs, it is a brittle Spindle, that he now recommends to future Ages as a Monument of his Heroiſm. The true Hero bluſhes at ſuch Weakneſs: His Proſperity may poſſibly fail or bely him; but his Virtue never fails him, but lives to avenge the Injuries of ſenſeleſs Fortune. He will never ceaſe to be great, becauſe he is conſtantly virtuous; and though the Man diſappears at laſt, yet the Hero lives for ever.

CHAP. XIII.

Reality and Appearance. A Moral Fable.

ENVY has ſtrange Eyes; ſhe diſcovers Things at ſo great a Diſtance, that ſhe ſeems to divine them rather than diſcern them: She would be glad not to ſee ſo much as ſhe does; and yet ſhe has a ſtrong Impulſe to ſee even what does not exiſt: Though ſhe has ſuch piercing Eyes, yet they are ſeldom free from Clouds; and, what one would think a Paradox, thoſe Clouds only ſerve to make her more clear-ſighted. It was with ſuch Eyes as theſe one Day, that the other Birds looked upon the Peacock, *Juno*'s Favourite, and the Wonder of their Species. They ſaw him ſhining in all his glittering Beauties, diſplayed in various Shades and Figures: From Looking they proceeded to Admiration, and from Admiration to a furious Jealouſy. For generally they that have not an Emulation to aſpire after what is noble and illuſtrious, fall into this Meanneſs and Baſeneſs of Envy.

The Crow, the ugliest of the feathered Race, was most enraged at the Beauty of the Peacock, because she her self was most shamefully plumed; she went croaking to all the Birds, the Eagles, Swans, Spar-hawks, not forgetting the very Owls, to engage them all in a common League against *Juno*'s Favourite. She always began her harangue with faint Praises, which served as a Prelude to her virulent Satyr. The Peacock, says she, is beautiful, is pretty, is a Darling. But in Truth he is nothing of all this, because he affects to appear so. The finest Qualities lose their Value, when we are too desirous of shewing them: To act in that Manner is a Sort of Self-praise; and to praise one's self is to deserve the Contempt of others.

The Swan of *Bilbilis* said nothing at all: He sung: and his Notes run all upon Pride, as the most insupportable and unpardonable of all Vices. If the majestick Eagle, added he, were inclined to display his pompous Feathers, he would as certainly attract our Eyes, as he sustains those of the Sun. But even the Phœnix, the Miracle of Nature, scorns that Vanity, and leaves it for the depraved Taste of the Vulgar; and the more she detests Ostentation, the more true Glory attends her Solitude.

The Swan sung a long Time in the same Strain; for they, who like him take Delight in Silence, cannot tell how to give over when once they have broke it. His Notes prevailed so far as to kindle Envy in all their Breasts, more especially in the weak ones, that are most easily provoked and exasperated: For Envy always by some Means or other finds Subject-matter enough to prey upon. The bad or the good, the false or the true, the real or the chimerical, all this she equally falls upon; that is, the Evil, to delight her self with it, and to make it worse; the good, to poison it, and feed her

her Gall with it. What an odd, unaccountable Paſſion is this, at once to extract its Food and Puniſhment out of another's Happineſs! All the Birds then reſolved with an unanimous Conſent to decry the Peacock's Beauty, if they could not entirely deprive him of it. For which Purpoſe they made uſe of Stratagem and Artifice, and concealed their Envy under a Charge and Impeachment of Pride, which they determined to draw up againſt the Peacock. If we can prevail ſo far, ſays the Magpye, as to hinder this gawdy Bird of *Juno*'s from unfolding his proud Diſplay of Feathers, we ſhall at leaſt eclipſe his Beauty. Ay, replied a Bird of Prey, for that which does not appear, is almoſt as if it were not. Learning is nothing (added ſome other more judicious and ſprightly Birds) even Learning is nothing, if the World does not know that one has it. Things are not always rated according as they really are, but according as they appear to be. The Number of Fools infinitely ſurpaſſes the Number of the Wiſe; the former only regard the Surface of Things, and though the latter do penetrate into their Subſtance, yet Illuſion, which is almoſt univerſal, gets the better of their Judgment, and draws them ſometimes along with the Current in ſpight of their Underſtanding.

After theſe Reflexions, which Envy, ſo ingenious at Miſchief, inſpired, the winged Commonwealth ſent to ſignify their Complaint to the Peacock. The Raven, the Crow, the Magpye, with ſuch other ill-natured Birds, undertook the Commiſſion. The Eagle had refuſed it, as beneath his Nobility, the Phœnix as contrary to her Modeſty, the Dove as unſuitable to her Candour. However, the Committee ſet forwards, and ſoon arrived at the Palace of Riches, the ordinary Place of the Peacock's Reſidence. The firſt Object that

occurred to them, was an *Indian* Parrot, perched upon a Balcony: The Parrot, without their aſking him any Queſtions, told them all he knew, which was as much as they wanted. When they had learnt where the Peacock was, they deſired a Monkey, an ancient Domeſtick of the Palace, to give Notice of their coming, which the Monkey did with the beſt Grace in the World. The News pleaſed the Peacock, who thought this Adventure would be a fine Opportunity for him to ſhew himſelf. He received this Viſit from his Fellow-birds in a ſpacious Court-yard, the Theatre of his Glory, which he then diſputed by the Splendor of his Plumage daily glittering in the Rays of the Sun.

But how beautiful ſoever this Spectacle was, which the Peacock preſented them with, it did not ſucceed at this Time. The moſt excellent Things depend very much upon the Circumſtances of Place, and the Perſons before whom they appear. The Eyes of Envy is a Poiſon, that infects every thing; it is the fatal Look of the Baſiliſk. The Birds more envious and enraged than ever at the Beauty of the Peacock, which now ſeemed to inſult them, diſparaged and decryed it to his Face with great Bitterneſs. Doſt thou know, thou vaineſt and weakeſt of Birds, doſt thou know what has brought us hither in the Name of all the Feathered Senate? It is to acquaint thee, that we are all extremely offended at thy vain-glorious Foppery; for ſo thy motley Train ought to be called. What a vain Piece of Singularity is it, that thou only, of the whole Species, ſhouldeſt diſplay thy Feathers in ſuch a Manner, though an infinite Number of others could do it with more Honour? The Heron does not affect to make his Tufts flutter in the wanton Zephirs; neither does the Auſtrich pretend to make a glittering Spectacle of his Bunch of Feathers. The Senate therefore enjoins thee to lay

lay aſide thy fooliſh Singularity, and to keep thy Tail tight and cloſe: This Ordinance concerns thy own Intereſt; for if thou hadſt a little more Solidity, and leſs Levity, thou wouldſt have known, that by ſtriving to appear beautiful, thou diſfigureſt thy ſelf with Grimaces. Oſtentation is a Fault peculiar to the Vulgar; it proceeds from a ſilly Vanity, and that Vanity from a Littleneſs of Mind, which prompts them to contemn wiſe and reaſonable People, who juſtly deteſt their Folly. Reſervedneſs and Modeſty are a Safe-guard to Merit; to make a Parade of it, expoſes it to Danger: Realities are ſatisfied with themſelves, without the Aſſiſtance of Pageantry. In a Word, thou art the Symbol of Riches; and to diſcover them is an Argument of Folly, not of Diſcretion.

At this cutting Leſſon of Morality, *Juno*'s Favourite was confounded; however, after a few Moments Trouble and Diſorder, he cryed out, O Praiſe, thou ſeldom comeſt to us but from Strangers! O Contempt, thou always comeſt from our Neighbours and Kindred! What! whilſt the plain, natural Beauty of my Feathers attracts the Eyes and Praiſes of human Creatures, ſhall I be a Prey to the prating, opprobrious Tongues of Crows and Magpies? Why do not they condemn my Beauty it ſelf, as well as the Appearance of it? Does Heaven, which gave me the one, forbid the other? It it a Part of Prudence to know how to appear; to have Wiſdom, and to know when and how to ſhew our Wiſdom, is, in my Judgment, to be doubly wiſe. A little of the external is ſometimes of more Import than the moſt ſolid Treaſure that lies concealed. Of what Uſe would all the Wonders of Nature be, if they were doomed to an eternal Inviſibility? If the Sun were always eclipſed with thick Darkneſs? If Gold remained for ever in the Womb of the Earth? If Pearls and precious

Stones were always to lie at the Bottom of the Sea?

The Peacock had ſcarce uttered theſe laſt Words, when he begun again to diſplay his beauteous Plumage, in all its Majeſty and Glory. Envy at this fell into a terrible Fume, raging and exclaiming in a moſt violent Manner. The Committee conſtrued this Behaviour of the Peacock's as an outragious Inſult to their Remonſtrances: They all in an Inſtant fell furiouſly upon him, ſome endeavouring to pluck out his Eyes, others attacking and tearing his Plumage, reſolving not to leave him a Feather. In ſhort, the poor Peacock was never in ſo great a Danger in his whole Life; he was ſo horridly chilled with the Fright, that ever ſince he has had that Hoarſeneſs of Voice, which diſtinguiſhes him from other Birds to this Day. However, he turned his Thoughts upon his Safety, but could find out no Way for it, except what the weakeſt make uſe of on ſuch Occaſions, which was to cry out with all his Might, calling Heaven and Earth to his Aſſiſtance. His Enemies, to prevent his being heard, mimicked his Screamings, and cryed out in the ſame Manner. This Diſturbance alarmed the Neighbourhood, and brought together great Numbers of Birds and other Animals: A Lion, a Tyger, a Bear, and two Monkies, Domeſticks of the Palace of Riches, all came to ſuccour their commenſal Friend, whoſe Voice they had diſtinguiſhed from the reſt. The Cries and Crokings of the Ravens and Magpies brought a Wolf and a Fox out of the midſt of the Fields, who expected a Diſſection of ſome dead Carcaſs or other had been the Thing in Queſtion; an Eagle too, that perhaps had fallen ſhort of his Prey, came and honoured the Aſſembly, when he was leaſt expected.

Now

Now the Lion interpoſed his Authority to appeaſe the Quarrel, and declared it would be a Pleaſure to him to accommodate it to the Satisfaction of both Parties; at the ſame Time commanding Moderation to the one, and Silence to the other. He had already diſcovered by ſome Words which Envy let fall, that ſhe was in the wrong, and had covered over a vile Action with the ſpecious Cloak of Virtue: However, he propoſed that a further Examination of the Difference ſhould be referred to a third Perſon; which third Perſon was the Fox, a Judge of great Wiſdom and Sagacity. The Arbitrator was accepted by both Parties, and they ſeverally took their Oaths to abide by his Deciſion. The Fox made uſe of all his Addreſs and Complaiſance to pleaſe the whole Aſſembly, to flatter the Lion without offending the Eagle, and to do Juſtice without bringing himſelf into any Broil.

It is a Queſtion, ſays the Arbitrator, it is a Queſtion controverted by the ableſt Politicians, *whether or no Reality is of more Importance than Appearance.* It is certain, that very often Things great in themſelves make little or no Appearance; and that on the contrary, Things little in themſelves make a great Appearance. From which Propoſition I draw this Concluſion, that in many Caſes Appearance is of more Importance than Reality. Appearance is a Kind of Supplement proper to fill up a Vacuity or Emptineſs; it is moreover the Ornament and Grace of Things ſolid and ſubſtantial: It gives an additional Value to the Objects of our Senſes, and yet more to the Qualities of our Minds, provided it be regulated by a due Regard to Perſons and Circumſtances. Then it is becoming to ſhew the Talent we are poſſeſſed of; it is the proper Criſis for making its Appearance.

Some

Some Perſons in the World acquire a great Reputation and Eſteem with a ſlender Stock of Merit, and would paſs for Prodigies, if they had a little more. Now this comes to paſs from their knowing perfectly well how to join Reality and Appearance together; others, on the contrary, that have not this Skill, always loſe a conſiderable Part of their Merit. It is therefore undeniable, and what we muſt needs allow, that Appearance is abſolutely neceſſary, and gives Things in ſome Meaſure a ſecond Exiſtence: For I ſuppoſe a real Merit, upon which this Appearance is founded, otherwiſe it is but a vain Shadow, which can only impoſe upon the Vulgar, and is laughed at by Perſons of Underſtanding. For Example, ſome People have a vehement Deſire to ſignalize their Learning; and what is the Conſequence? They place their Ignorance by that Means in a ſtronger Light, become the Trumpeters of their own Folly, and cover themſelves with Shame and Reproach, which they would have been ſcreened from by Silence and Obſcurity.

To conclude, nothing ought to be leſs affected than Shew and Appearance, becauſe nothing ſo much reſembles Emptineſs and Vanity. It is a difficult Point to ſhew our ſelves without giving ſome little Suſpicions, that we aim at Diſtinction. It requires a nice Management and Skill to make our ſelves known without offending our Competitors, or giving Umbrage to weak Minds. As the Body ſhould abſtain from all Exceſs, in order to preſerve its Health, ſo ſhould the Mind abſtain from all Affectation, in order to maintain its Dignity and Honour; this Temperance of the Mind is as neceſſary as that of the Body. Merit that dilates it ſelf too much is like a tender Flower, which ſome malignant Blaſt or other falls upon, and ſpoils its opening Beauties.

To

To give the World an advantageous Idea of us, a Word or two pertinently made uſe of is ſometimes ſufficient, provided they appear to be ſpoken without Deſign; ſometimes Silence it ſelf in a proper Way, or a certain prudent Diſſimulation, will ſuffice: Theſe Kinds of Reſtrictions well timed, are ſo far from hiding our Merit, that they illuſtrate it the more to ſuch Perſons as one would deſire it ſhould be known to; I mean thoſe of a true Taſte and good Diſcerning. Certainly it is a great Delicacy of Judgment to know how to ſhew one's Talents but by Halves; by that Means we have it in our Power to appear more conſpicuous upon a proper Occaſion; we riſe in the World's Eſteem by thus keeping a Reſerve of Merit to make farther Advances with: In ſhort, it honourably feeds and cheriſhes People's Expectation of us, when they find us always furniſhed with new Matter and freſh Entertainment.

But to come to the Caſe in Hand. I ſay, and it is my Judgment, that it would be an unheard-of Injury to the Peacock, to leave him his Beauty, as Juſtice requires us, and at the ſame time to forbid him the diſplaying of it, which in Gratitude to Nature he is obliged to: Beſides, it would be utterly in vain to enjoin him never to ſpread and unfold his Feathers; it would be the ſame thing as to enjoin him not to breathe; for he can no more forbear to ſhew himſelf, than he can ceaſe to be a Peacock.

The only effectual Means then, in my Opinion, to bring the Matter to a fair Accommodation, is to ordain upon the moſt grievous Penalties, that the Peacock ſhall never diſplay the Beauty of his Plumage, without caſting his Eyes, the ſame Moment, upon the Deformity of his Feet: I will anſwer for it, this mortifying, humbling Circumſtance, will be a ſufficient Preſervative againſt Vanity

nity. The whole Audience applauded the Umpire's Determination; the Peacock acquieſced in it; and the Aſſembly, at their breaking up, diſpatched one of the moſt illuſtrious Birds to the wiſe *Æſop*, to deſire the Favour of him to admit this modern Fable amongſt his.

CHAP. XIV.

Humour. A Satyr.

THE Man truly great, and truly magnanimous, is never actuated by Humour; he is as immoveable as a Rock againſt ſuch mean Impulſes and ſhameful Impreſſions. Being never abſent from himſelf, he conſtantly obſerves the Diſpoſitions that ſtir in him; and being always Maſter of himſelf, he knows how to conquer them, whenever he finds them contrary to ſound Reaſon. This Attentiveneſs to the Motions of his own Heart, and this Command of his Temper, are the Effects of an auſtere Wiſdom, and extraordinary Vigour of Mind and Judgment; but as for the Generality of Men, they reflect very little upon their Humours; and I am afraid do not ſo much as know them. Be that as it will, they are ſo far from uſing any effectual Means to ſubdue them, that they live under their Direction, and are abſolutely at their Diſpoſal. What an ignoble, vile Slavery is this? It throws them into a Thouſand Contradictions and Inconſiſtencies every Day, both in regard to themſelves and others. They obſtinately defend to Day, what they will violently oppoſe to Morrow; they deſpiſe in the Evening, what they eſteemed in the Morning; Morning do I ſay? That is too long for their fickle Minds to reſt in one Situation: In the ſame Hour they change from Gaiety to Melancholy; from Niceneſs to Brutiſhneſs;

neſs; from Delicacy and Tender-heartedneſs to Fierceneſs and Cruelty; from Praiſes to Invectives; from Meekneſs to Fury; and from good Senſe to the moſt extravagant Folly.

Have I ever ſeen People of this inconſiſtent, fickle, variable humour? Yes, I have ſeen but too many of them, and in all States and Conditions of Life. Are they not rather Chimera's? Yes, but they are living Chimera's, real, actual Chimera's; for theſe men unite in themſelves Things, that appear incompatible, and though verified in them, yet hardly ſeem credible or poſſible. Being ſubject and enſlaved to all the Impreſſions of Humours, and conſequently ſuſceptible of every Disjunctive or Inconſiſtency, they are never like themſelves a whole Hour together; they have no Stability or fixed Situation, any longer than the Humour is fixed in them; their Condition is little better than a State of Madneſs.

In ſhort, which Way are theſe Humouriſts to be taken? You will ſay perhaps by their Reaſon. But when is it that they are directed by Reaſon? That is an uncertain Period, which we cannot much rely upon; it is one of their lucid Intervals, which it is hard to lay hold on to any good Purpoſe. The wiſeſt Courſe, in my Opinion, is to abandon and give them up intirely to their own Viciſſitudes and Whimſies and to let them build and unbuild juſt as they pleaſe. They are determined and influenced by the Moon; it is ſhe makes them ſpeak *pro* or *con*, right or wrong, no Matter whether. Under the Influence of *Saturn* they will deny and contradict every Thing; and as readily ſubſcribe to it under that of *Jupiter*.

To be driven thus by the Motions and Impulſes of Humour is a double Slavery; one of the Heart, and another of the Underſtanding; A wretched Condition, from which to ranſom and deliver one's

ſelf

ſelf is almoſt an inſuperable Difficulty; for even to prevent it requires no little Pains and Application. However, we ought to omit Nothing that may contribute to ſtem the Torrent, whatever Progreſs it has already made. We ſhould ſtrive at leaſt to gain ſo far upon our ſelves, as to continue in a State of Inaction, rather than act by the Suggeſtions of Humour. When we perceive it coming upon us, we ſhould evade its Attacks, and ſuſpend our Judgments and Reſolutions till the Vapour is over, leſt it ſmother and extinguiſh the Light of our Reaſon. It is true, we muſt uſe great Violence upon our ſelves to bear up againſt Humour, and to ſtop its impetuous Current. But a Diſeaſe, that is attended with ſuch lamentable Conſequences, well deſerves our utmoſt Endeavours and Attention. Let a Remedy be never ſo bitter or violent, People generally have Reſolution enough to take it, eſpecially when it is the only one that is capable of curing their Diſtemper.

The Perſons of this ſtrange Turn and Diſpoſition, that are always full of Whims and Humours, are inſupportable to all Mankind. They are the Scourges and Plagues of Society; Enemies to all Politeneſs, good Taſte, and every Thing that is agreeable to reaſonable Minds; they ſet up for the Patrons and Protectors of any Thing that is repugnant to good Senſe, becauſe ſuch is their Humour. Does any Man in Converſation advance a plauſible or judicious Propoſition? Theſe Humouriſts have always ſome ridiculous Doubt, ſome impertinent Difficulty or other to object againſt it. Let who will ſpeak, they are his Opponents; Adverſaries always ready to defend the Negative; and for no other Reaſon in the World, but that they were prevented in the Affirmative. If they had happened to ſpeak firſt, they would have obſtinately maintained, what they now as vehemently oppoſe from the

the Mouth of another. And if we do yield them the Field of Battle at any Time through a neceſſary Complaiſance, we do not come off with them a Bit the better for that Submiſſion. They immediately wheel about, attack their own Opinion, and requite us with a Lie for the Condeſcenſion we have ſhewn to their Weakneſs. How prepoſterous is the Reaſon of ſuch Men! Alas! Their Diſtemper is more incurable than a real, downright Madneſs. For Mad-men will in ſome Sort acknowledge our Civility, when we ſeem to give into their Viſions; at leaſt they will behave with more Gentleneſs towards us. But Humouriſts only grow the worſe; they become the more Unreaſonable and Incorrigible for the Deference we ſhew them.

WOULD a Man think it? There are whole Nations of this extravagant fantaſtical Turn. Nothing is more certain; however we ſhall not mention any in particular. It is enough, that we advertiſe the World of it; let them make uſe of their own Obſervation. Be that as it will, when a Man finds himſelf accidentally in Company with one of theſe extravagant Humouriſts, he is commonly ſtartled and ſurprized at his frequent Inſults and Ramblings. But that Surprize will not long diſturb or diſcompoſe a Man of Senſe. After he has coolly obſerved the ſudden Flights and Wanderings of the Party a little, he will venture to accoſt him, to queſtion him, and in ſome Meaſure to nettle and provoke him; by which Means he turns an unpleaſant Adventure into an agreeable Amuſement. And when the Humouriſt begins to grow too troubleſome and inſupportable, he then draws his Neck out of the Collar by ſome handſome Turn or obliging Evaſion. But ſuppoſe a couple of theſe *Miſanthropi* happen to be engaged together; then beware how you eſpouſe either Party; and beſure you keep your ſelf only a Spectator. If the Champions

pions have their Imaginations heated, as is generally the Caſe, and that they be upon equal Terms in that Reſpect, I will anſwer for it, they will afford you a very pleaſant and diverting Scene.

But after all; I can hardly believe there are any Men upon Earth ſo perfectly equal in their Tempers, as never to ſhew the leaſt Alteration or Diſcompoſure. We continually ſee and hear Things ſo very much out of the Way, and ſo repugnant to Reaſon, that our Indignation will of Neceſſity riſe up in us, and ſuddenly bolt out, before we can poſſibly repreſs its firſt Sallies and Motions. But this is not what I call being an Humouriſt: Reaſon it ſelf makes us incapable of hearing ſuch extravagant Impertinencies without ſome Emotion; otherwiſe they would be authorized and encouraged to the Shame and Diſgrace of our rational Faculty. To be an Humouriſt is to be under the Dominion and Subjection of Humours, to be dependent upon them, and to be governed by their Impulſes without Regard to any Thing elſe; which I have already declared to be a State of Servitude and Slavery. If a Man has not good Senſe enough to diſcern this enormous Fault in himſelf, much leſs will he have Strength and Reſolution enough to correct it. Beſides, this Species of People are ſo far from believing themſelves to be what they really are, that they would not change their Qualities; they would not wiſh to be in the Condition of the moſt polite, the moſt accompliſhed and judicious Perſons in the World. They come into a Converſation with the ſame Spirit, as a proud Diſputant, an inſolent Wrangler comes with into the Hall of Diſputation. They take up every Thing, conteſt every Thing, and cavil at every Thing; more fierce than Harpies, they never let go their hold, till they have ſpent all the Gall of their virulent Humour. And if they happen to have

have a Smack or Tincture of Learning, then they are ſtill more outrageouſly obſtinate and incorrigible. Then from Batchelors of a petty Science, they commence Licentiates in Nonſence, and Doctors of Extravagances. Such are the Conſequences and Effects of Humour, when a Man has not Wiſdom and Reſolution to bridle and reſtrain it.

CHAP. XV.

The Man of quick and happy Expedients.

THUNDER-Bolts were the Arms, which the fabulous *Jupiter* made uſe of, when he had a Mind in an Inſtant to ſignalize his Power over mortal Men. With theſe Arms he triumphed over the Rebel Giants. Becauſe Swiftneſs is the Parent of quick Succeſs, the Eagle, whoſe towering, rapid Flight mounts up to the very Sun, was made choice of by *Jove* to carry this celeſtial Artillery. Which Miniſter of the God of Thunders is a Symbol of great Genius's, whoſe peculiar Talent is an elevated ſoaring Capacity, and a rapid Swiftneſs in the Execution of Enterprizes.

THERE are ſome Genius's that never ſucceed without a great deal of Thought and Conſideration; there are others, whoſe firſt Thought is attended with Succeſs. The latter Sort are inimitable; the former are the Models for us to copy after. *A Thing is ſoon enough done, if well done*, was one of the antient Sage's Maxims. We do not examine in a Piece of Work the Quantity of Time that was beſtowed upon it; but the Perfection of the Work is the Thing we conſider. That is the Standard by which we meaſure and proportion our Eſteem. As to the Time which might be ſpent in the Performance, that is a Circum-

ſtance which either eſcapes our Knowledge, or ſlips out of our Memories; the Excellence of the Work is the only Thing that continues, or is certainly known.

Besides, according to the common Courſe of Things, that which is done in haſte, is of ſhort Duration; and the Reaſon of its laſting ſo little a while is, that it was finiſhed too ſoon. The firſt Fruits of the Seaſon are ſeldom ſo well-taſted, or ſo fit for keeping, as the other; they are, if I may uſe the Mataphor, *Saturn*'s tendereſt, weakeſt Children, which for that Reaſon are the more eaſily devoured by their Parent. If then, for Example, we would tranſmit a Work of our Underſtanding to the lateſt Poſterity, certainly we ought to perform it without Precipitation. Perhaps it is not too much, to ſet apart one Half of our Lives for the Deſign and Compoſition, and the other Half for giving it the laſt and finiſhing Touches, if we deſire it ſhould have the Seal of a literary Immortality.

Since every thing then that is good in it ſelf deſerves our Eſteem, methinks that which is both good in it ſelf, and ſaid or done off-hand, doubly deſerves it. Succeſs of this latter Sort, requires both a quick and happy Genius, which are two Things each of them of great Value, eſpecially when they are united together. Some People reflect a great deal, and yet find their Reflexions after all but as ſo many Beatings of the Air, ſo many vain and fruitleſs Efforts. There are others that always hit the Mark, always carry their Point, though they never thought upon the Matter before-hand: Vivacity in theſe ſupplies the Want of deep Meditation; the firſt Thought that occurs to their Minds is equivalent to the longeſt Deliberation; they never meet with Surprizes, are never obſtructed by unforeſeen Circumſtances; they have

have a Preſence of Mind, which anſwers the End of the greateſt Foreſight. In Converſation they intermix a Hundred fine Turns of Wit; in Council they furniſh a Thouſand new Expedients, which are the more ſurprizing and agreeable, becauſe they evidently flow without Premeditation. It is this Readineſs of Genius that raiſes our Admiration, and makes an Extemporary ſo charming and agreeable. Therefore an off-hand Piece of Wit, though not extraordinary in the Kind, is ſometimes more applauded than an elaborate Performance, that has coſt many tedious Lucubrations: A ſmall, inconſiderable Enterprize, effected quickly and off-hand, is ſometimes more pleaſing and aſtoniſhing than an important one that has been a long Time in forming and concerting.

THAT Axiom of *Charles* V. *Time and I are equal to two Men*, was very judicious; but yet it implies nothing great or uncommon; the extraordinary is to have a Sufficiency for every thing, without the Help of Time; for when we ſay *Time*, we ſay all Things in one Word: It is as much as to ſay, Counſel, Foreſight, Opportunity, Maturity of Affairs, *&c.* Now what are all theſe Things but ſo many Mortgages, as it were, ſo many purchaſed Claims and Titles to the Succeſs of an Affair? But the lively, happy Genius, to which every Incident is an immediate Succeſs, is like the Proprietor of a plentiful Eſtate, that enjoys his Revenues at his Pleaſure. But farther, after Projects are hatched by Meditation, ranged and put in Order by Prudence, ripened by Patience, and favoured by Opportunity; what do theſe Projects come to? Why, very often they miſcarry in the Execution; whereas on the contrary, ſuch a Vivacity as is here meant, lets you ſee Prodigies in an inſtant, where the profoundeſt Deliberation, and the cooleſt Underſtanding, would be loſt and confounded.

I KNOW People generally aſcribe the Glory of theſe ſudden Succeſſes to Chance; but that is doing Injuſtice to the aſtoniſhing Sagacity from whence they proceed; there is none but vulgar, envious Souls, that will detract from the Honour of ſuch Atchievements: Beſides, this Perfection, which is the peculiar Property of great Men, cannot poſſibly be the Effect of Art; it is purely a Talent and Gift of Nature, that has formed them of an exquiſite Temper; Art can have no Place, where there is ſcarce Room to admit of Reflexion; the Want of Time for Deliberation is ſupplied by a ſurprizing Quickneſs of Conception, and their happy Genius ſuggeſts Things to their Minds, which they have neither had Time nor Occaſion to think of. Then the great Man exerts that Command he has over himſelf to haſten and puſh the Enterprize forwards, without Precipitation or Hurry; and to prevent his being diſturbed in Time of Action, he relies upon his Happineſs and good Fortune, which he has already experienced. By the Help of theſe Diſpoſitions, his Sagacity, though always equally quick and lively, becomes calm and ſerene, removes an Obſtacle, and maſters a Difficulty in leſs Time than a common Man would examine them.

THE great Man is not afraid to rely upon his happy Vivacity in the moſt arduous Enterprizes: Difficulties are the proper Objects and Food of his Genius for prompt Expedients; an Obſtacle rouzes and awakens his Penetration, in the ſame Manner as Danger inſpires the Brave with Courage.

How many People do we know, who never reaſon better than when they are moſt at a Pinch? How many that never eſcape an Ambuſh more eaſily than when the greateſt Pains are taken to draw them into it? The more near and preſſing the Danger is, the quicker Expedient it requires; ſuch

ſuch Occurrences produce a Kind of Antiperiſtaſis in the great Man, which doubles the Keenneſs of his Penetration, ſubtilizes and refines his Wit, and aſſures him a wiſe and prudent Conduct.

But there is a Difference in Mens Genius's as to this Particular, which we do not well underſtand the Cauſe of: With ſome, every ſudden Sally or haſty Enterprize ſucceeds well, and every Scheme they have ſtudied and premeditated, ſucceeds ill; with others, if an Expedient does not occur to them immediately, it never occurs to them at all; they have nothing to hope for from Reflexion; their Hour is irretrievably paſt and gone: But then, on the other Hand, they have a Thouſand Things that occur to them in an inſtant; ſo that the Barrenneſs of their Reflexion is abundantly compenſated by their ſingular Vivacity and fruitful Imagination.

It may be ſaid in general, that an extemporary Performance, take it in what Way you pleaſe, is often of infinite Advantage to its Author, without mentioning the Admiration that attends it. One judicious Deciſion pronounced *extempore*, procured King *Solomon* the Appellation of Wiſe, and made him more formidable than all his Power and Riches had done before. *Alexander* and *Cæſar* were judged worthy of being the two eldeſt Sons of *Fame*; the former for a lively, briſk Action, and the latter for a fine, pertinent Expreſſion; *Alexander* for having cut the *Gordian* Knot, which he attempted in vain to untie; and *Cæſar* for having ſaid, when he was once falling, *It is not a Fall, but a taking of Poſſeſſion.* By theſe two wonderful Marks of Genius, they were both allotted in their Turns to the Empire of the World.

But if a quick, ſprightly Repartee charm us, a rapid, ſwift Expedition ought to tranſport us with Aſtoniſhment. Such a happy Celerity towards the Effect,

Effect, discovers a prodigious Activity in the Cause, a great Capacity in forming the Project, and an extensive Wisdom and Skill in the quick ranging and ordering of the Means. Moreover, that Vivacity of Genius which animates and presides over all this, is so much the more excellent and surprizing, as Quickness is commonly remote from Solidity, Promptness from Prudence, Wit from Judgment, Imagination from Conduct, and Fire from Caution and Discretion. This Perfection however, be it never so rare and uncommon, is essentially necessary for the Commanders of Armies. It is taken for granted they have it, at least it is presumed they are not far short of it, since it is their proper and peculiar Attribute. In short, almost all their Resolutions and Actions are extemporary. At a Siege, or in an Engagement, a Thousand Incidents occur, which no Penetration could possibly foresee, which the Enemy had not concerted, but is himself the first that is alarmed and surprized at them. It it the present, sudden Occasion, which warns the General, and puts him upon thinking and acting without Delay; it is from his quick and happy Genius the Victory must proceed.

As to a sovereign, it concerns him to use a great deal of Thought and Reflexion: The Time that is necessary for ripening Affairs, is generally in his Disposal; the Rank, in which Providence has placed him, is to be maintained more by the Head, than by the Arm: He thinks for a whole Kingdom; all his Proceedings are so many Steps towards the Happiness or Unhappiness of his People; all his Faults are in some sort eternal, because a malicious Tradition will transmit and hand them down from one Age to another, though History were silent. In a Word, a Monarch's Actions are all general Actions, inasmuch as their Influence extends to every particular Person. His Wisdom therefore

should

ſhould never ſlight or diſdain the neceſſary Counſels of an auxiliary Wiſdom.

CHAP. XVI.

Singularity. A Satyr.

IT was immediate Matter of Reflexion to the Wiſe, and of Deriſion to others, to ſee *Diogenes* run about the publick Streets of the City with a Lantern in his Hand at Mid-day. Yet this Action of his was almoſt generally approved of, when the Philoſopher had declared his Reaſon for it. I am looking for Men, ſays he, with a great Curioſity, and deſire to find ſome; but they are inviſible to me; I can find none. How! anſwered the People; what are all theſe, that you look upon? Are they not Men? No, replied *Diogenes*, theſe are only the Figures of Men, not really and truly Men. This Philoſopher obſerved only that Part of the Men, which was moſt ſhocking to his good Senſe, and over-looked the reſt.

IN Truth, there are ſome Failings and Imperfections more obvious and remarkable than others, as well as ſome Virtues more eminent and conſpicuous; theſe attract the Eſteem, and the other the Contempt of Mankind. Now of all the moſt notable Imperfections of Men, Singularity is, in my Judgment, beyond all Contradiction the greateſt, with reſpect to the Nature of it, and the moſt predominant with reſpect to the Numbers that are ſubject to it. It is the Nature of this Fault to render a Man unlike himſelf, of the doubtful Gender, as it were, or a kind of Hermaphrodite, an odd Medley, or a fantaſtick Compoſition, not to be defined or deſcribed. As to the Numbers of thoſe that give into it, they are ſo infinite, that we

we may venture to ſay, there are a Hundred that do, for one that does not.

SHOULD all other ridiculous Subjects, of which the World is plentifully ſtored, happen to fail together, we ſhould ſcarcely be ſenſible of the Loſs; Singularity alone would abundantly compenſate it, ſo ſpacious a Field does that afford for Laughter and Ridicule. Ridiculouſneſs ſeems to be the very End that it gravely aims at; it is at leaſt the Subject it works upon, and the Object it affects and purſues in all its Actions. I really know ſome Perſons that would be glad, if it were poſſible, to ſpeak ſome other Way than with their Mouths, in order to be diſtinguiſhed from the Vulgar. And what is it they do under this common Neceſſity? Speak they muſt, but they are reſolved it ſhall not be like other People; they will gain this Point at leaſt, that they will have a Way and Manner peculiar to themſelves; and what is this Manner of theirs? It is to mince their Voice as much as they can, to cloſe their Lips, and ſqueeze their Words, that not one of them may come out till it is tortured and mutilated. To this they add an odd, affected Tone, peculiar to themſelves; they have a Sort of Dictionary of their own too, with a little Language, or rather Jargon of nice, finical Words, which they uſe upon all Occaſions, though they are fit to expreſs nothing but Trifles and Nonſenſe. In ſhort, for fear they ſhould be like other People, they do not really ſpeak, but liſp and chirp like Sparrows and Magpies.

ANOTHER Species, as ridiculous as the former, is of thoſe that become wilful Enemies to their own Taſtes and Palates, which they utterly renounce and ſacrifice in all their Eating and Drinking. And it is not from any Principle of Reaſon or Virtue, but only through Singularity, that they thus deny themſelves what they naturally love.

Perverſe

Perverſe Creatures, with whom it is a ſufficient Reaſon to reject a Thing, if it be agreeable to the general Taſte. They muſt have forſooth, ſome inſipid Kickſhaws of their own, which they call Ambroſia, or Meat for the Gods: The beſt and moſt exquiſite Wine they refuſe, that they may ſwill in Bumpers of Water, which, they will tell you, are as reliſhing, pleaſant, refreſhing, and wholeſome, as heavenly Nectar. Thus do they daily invent ſome new Extravagance or other to diſtinguiſh and ſingularize themſelves more and more; and it muſt be confeſſed they do that effectually. For no Mortal caring for their whimſical Ragoos beſides themſelves, they really get the Character of being ſingular to the laſt Degree. However, it happens ſometimes that their Appetite compels them to bely their Folly in ſpight of all their Endeavours to maintain it. But if at ſuch a Time they are obliged to commend the Goodneſs of the Meat, they are extremely concerned the Uſe of it is ſo common. This brings to my Remembrance a particular Paſſage of one of the moſt perfect Originals of this Species. After he had drunk ſome old Wine, which he found was excellently good, he could not forbear crying out, *O the moſt delicious Liquor in the World! what a Pity it is, this admirable Wine is not extremely ſcarce! If it could be had by none but Perſons of Diſtinction, it would be the moſt charming and exquiſite Pleaſure of my Life.*

But there is one Sort of Singularity (if we may call it by that Name) which ought to be the Object of our Ambition: I mean that which diſtinguiſheth us from common People by great and heroick Actions. This kind of Singularity takes its Riſe from a Greatneſs of Soul, and an Elevation of Sentiments; in which the true Nobility and Excellence of Man conſiſts; to wit, ſuch a Nobility as

as exempts us from the Paſſions and Imperfections which the Vulgar are enſlaved to. For in Reality Virtue is the prime Foundation of all true Heroiſm, which raiſes us to a Diſtinction from the Populace; Virtue is, if I may uſe the Term, its true Badge and Characteriſtick, that which dignifies and ennobles the Man, and gives him the glorious Appellation of Hero. It is by their Virtues the great Men ſhould be conſpicuous in this lower World, if they deſire to be the Glory of it; in the ſame Manner as the Stars ſhed their diffuſive Luſtre through the Firmament, of which they are the Ornament and Glory. This is the Singularity which the great Men ſhould aſpire after, which it is their eſſential Duty to acquire. What does it avail them to be diſtinguiſhed by their Rank, if they are not to be ſo by their Virtue? The more they are exalted, the more their Vices are in View; and the more remarkably their Vices appear, the more they debaſe and degrade them, and ſhamefully confound them with the Vulgar. It it true their Greatneſs will always be reſpected, becauſe it is in it ſelf *reſpectable:* But it will never ſurvive the Man, unleſs it be attended with Virtue. The great Man and the virtuous Man are ſynonymous Terms; theſe are inſeparable Qualities, one of which will never be tranſmitted with Honour to Poſterity without the other.

GREAT People are often ſubject to a certain haughty Singularity, that renders them inacceſſible and odious. But, if they would conſider it, they take the ready Way to draw the juſt hatred of their Inferiors upon them, inſtead of procuring their Affection and Eſteem. It is in their own Power to make themſelves amiable to all Mankind: The Privilege of their Rank would endear them to the common People, if their Behaviour was but natural, plain and courteous. Let them

but

but uſe this Sort of Demeanor, and the People will adore them. Their exalted Station is ſufficient to keep up their Superiority; they need not be afraid of loſing their Diſtinction. Beſides, to rely ſo much upon a conſtant, haughty Air of Greatneſs in order to ſupport their Grandeur, is a tacit Acknowledgment of a ſmall Stock of perſonal Merit. Our ſecond * *Mæcenas* of *Spain* knew how to ſuit and conform himſelf to all Things, and to all Perſons, when he was in the higheſt Stations and Employments. He had the Art of reconciling Majeſty with Affability, Greatneſs with Popularity, and the Hero with the Man. He was therefore univerſally beloved, eſteemed in his Lifetime, and lamented at his Death, even by the Enemies of his Country. I have heard it ſaid of him by Perſons of the greateſt Wildom and Delicacy of Underſtanding; that *He had the Art of being truly great, without affecting to appear ſo.* An Encomium more glorious, and perhaps more rarely merited than People imagine.

I NOW come to a third Species of Singularity; and they that compoſe it, deſerve to be placed amongſt the groteſque Figures of *Calot.*

It is the Pleaſure and Study of theſe pretty Gentlemen to make themſelves remarkable for their odd fantaſtick Ways of Dreſſing, Walking, Dancing and Saluting. Whatever is in common Uſe is their Averſion; Cuſtom is the natural Object of their moſt violent Antipathy. To dreſs themſelves after an antique Mode, to revive all the obſolete Faſhions, all the old Ceremonies, all the Attitudes, Poſtures, or rather gallant Grimaces of the antient Chivalry, is without Diſpute one of their moſt ſerious Occupations. Some of them have other Refinements, in my Judgment, as whimſical and

* The Earl of *Aguilar.*

ridiculous as the former. Are they in *Spain?* They are dreſſed after the *French* Faſhion. Are they in *France?* They follow the *Spaniſh* Faſhion. One while Pantaloons, another while Harlequins; at other Times any Thing in the World, ſo it be but contrary to what they ſhould be. They go into the Country dreſſed out in *Galillio*, and appear at Court in a Band. Have we then Occaſion for theſe Pantomimes to make us laugh? No ſure; there is a World of others, that acquit themſelves exceedingly well of that office.

We ought in Prudence never to give other People Occaſion to laugh at us; no, not even to a Child; then much leſs to Perſons of Underſtanding and Judgment. Yet I am very much tempted to believe, there are ſome People that ſtrive to make themſelves mere Drolls and Buffoons for the Diverſion of the Company, without putting the Spectators to Expence. Thus much is certain, they would not have a Day paſs over their Heads without giving ſome new Proof or other of their Singularity; ſome new Decoration of their Perſons; ſomething or other extraordinary either for Matter or Figure. Thus one Imperfection of Man becomes the Food and Nouriſhment of another: The Ridiculouſneſs of one Sort is Matter of Entertainment to the ſcoffing Diſpoſition of another.

But what a ſtrange Thing this Singularity muſt be in the Minds of Men, when the outward Appearances of it affords ſuch ample Matter of Deriſion! for ſome People are of ſuch an odd Caſt and Turn, that a Man would ſwear Nature had purpoſely formed their Taſte and Genius the wrong Way. Not that it really is ſo; but to hear them reaſon upon any Topick in the World, would tempt one to believe it. The Truth is, they take Pains to ſingularize themſelves; and in order to that,

that, they ſo conſtantly deviate from all common Ideas, that it becomes natural to them to think differently from the reſt of Mankind. Their Notions are all Paradoxes, heteroclite Syſtems, fine-drawn cob-web Reaſonings, chimerical Principles and Viſions, of which no Mortal but themſelves underſtand a Word; and it is much to be queſtioned, whether their Dreams are intelligible even to themſelves. Whatever is commonly received amongſt Men of true Taſte and ſound Judgment, they deſpiſe; and look upon it as mean and pitiful. If the Fools would be ſatisfied with feeding themſelves upon their fantaſtick Ideas, or with propounding them to others, it were ſomewhat tolerable: But no; to compleat their Singularity and Folly they will needs force them upon us, and that too with a magiſterial Tone, and an Air of ſober Madneſs: For they fancy theſe Airs and Appearances contribute very much to ſignalize their Merit, already ſo diſtinguiſhed in other Reſpects. As for the Company they talk to, they do not ſo much as look upon them; that would be doing them too much Honour; they caſt a ſide Glance at them perhaps with a ſupercilious Brow of Scorn and Contempt.

After all, Singularity is not an incurable Diſtemper. Is not their Reaſon alone, you will ſay, ſufficient to cure it? Yes; but, as theſe ſingular Gentlemen have ſo little to do with Reaſon, we will propoſe another Method, a Sort of Specifick for that Diſeaſe. And if they are not willing to be cured, we deſire no more of them than to read the Receipt. This Remedy then for Singularity is to conſider and view the ſame Folly in another Perſon, to obſerve and remark all its ridiculous, trivial, and inſipid Circumſtances. Theſe inſeparable Properties of Singularity are viſible and evident to every Body, even to thoſe that are infected with

the ſame Diſtemper. When they have taken a full View of themſelves in this faithful Mirrour, they muſt conſider the Conſequences and Effects of Singularity: What thoſe are, the Tongues of Malice and Ill-nature will loudly declare to all that are willing to hear them. Nor are the wiſeſt backward in publiſhing them; their Kindneſs and Charity induce them to that good Office for the Amendment of thoſe that ſtand in Need of Correction. Theſe Effects are, in two Words, to render themſelves contemptible Originals, whatever Merit they may otherwiſe have at the Bottom. If after this there be any one that will ſtill give into, or perſevere in Singularity, I ſhall look upon him as a Perſon abandoned and given over by his Phyſicians.

CHAP. XVII.

Man at the Point of Perfection. A Dialogue between the Author *and* Don Manuel.

Auth. THE *Perſians* had formerly an odd particular Cuſtom, which was never to ſee their Children, till they were ſeven Years of Age. Paternal Affection, though it be commonly ſo blind, did not ſhut their Eyes againſt the ordinary Weakneſſes of Infants: Their good Senſe had a Repugnancy to ſee and diſſemble thoſe Infirmities, much more to admire them, as moſt Fathers do. Thus did this People wait till Reaſon began to dawn and appear in their Children, before they would own and admit them in the Boſom of their Families.

Don Man. How! Did ever any Fathers deal ſo with their Children? Could they not bear with thoſe Infirmities of Infancy that are inſeparable from our tender Years? It is no Wonder then, that

that a Fool is ſo offenſive to a Man of Senſe, that is not related to him; I am not ſurprized that the Converſe of the one is ſo inſupportable to the other.

Auth. Be that as it will, Nature, though wiſe in all her Operations, yet does not immediately give the laſt Perfection to her Works; neither does Art immediately ſupply the Defect, be ſhe never ſo induſtrious. Both the one and the other advance ſlowly to their Period, which is Perfection; they proceed leiſurely, Step by Step; and it is late before they arrive at it.

Don Man. The Beginnings indeed of all Things, even of the greateſt, are but ſmall; it is by a ſlow progreſſive Improvement that they become finiſhed and perfect in their Kind. Whatever is quickly at its Perfection, is of little Value, and ſhort Duration. A Flower that quickly blows, quickly fades: whereas a Diamond, that is long in forming, may laſt to Eternity.

Auth. The Proceſs of Time, which you ſuppoſe neceſſary to bring Things to their Perfection, regards our ſelves as well as other Beings; we are not born full Men; we grow inſenſibly Day by Day, both with Reſpect to the Body and the Mind, until we arrive at a proper Manhood, to have our Reaſon clear, our Judgment ſound, our Mind formed, and our Diſcerning juſt, *&c.*

Don Man. Undoubtedly Man is obliged to attain his Perfection after this progreſſive Manner. But the Perfection you ſpeak of, is rather a Talent or Gift of Nature, not beſtowed indifferently upon all. We ſee ſome People that are paſt Children, that reaſon, underſtand, and have Experience, and yet are not what you call compleat and finiſhed Men: They ſtill want ſomething, which alſo has its Degrees, and is attainable by ſome in more, by others in leſs Time, provided they be qualified

to attain it at all. Some, we find, improve ſlowly in their Beginnings, and yet may poſſibly attain to Perfection in the End; we find others pretty good Proficients in all Reſpects; others again that are grown compleat and perfect.

Auth. I SHALL illuſtrate this Subject by a Simile, the better to explain by what Degrees we arrive at our Perfection. When Wine is juſt come from the Grape, it has an inſipid Sweetneſs, and when it is not entirely made, it has a crabbed Tartneſs: But when it has ſufficiently worked and fermented, it loſes its ſweetiſh Taſte, has no more of that Sourneſs, but comes at laſt to a true Reliſh and fine Flavour, equal to Nectar, provided it be Wine of a right and excellent Body. This is a Picture of the State of Infancy, Youth, and Manhood.

Don Man. GIVE me Leave to adopt your Simile. The ſeveral Progreſſions you mention, repreſent thoſe which the human Soul makes in the frail Veſſel of the Body, and thoſe Obſtacles and Impediments too, which obſtruct her Progreſs. Every Man experiences in himſelf that Inſipidneſs of Infancy, which nauſeates ſound Reaſon; that Sowerneſs and Rawneſs of Youth, that reliſhes nothing but ſenſible Objects, and is but an imperfect Sketch of the reaſonable Man. It is true, Nature ſeems to have granted to ſome particular Favourites a Diſpenſation of Years upon this Article. But thoſe Inſtances are very rare; and moreover they always retain ſome certain Tokens, ſome Remains or other of their Youth, by which a Man may ſee their Maturity came before its Seaſon. There are others, that have a certain Sedateneſs and Gravity, either natural or put on, which in Appearance belies the Imperfections of Youth. But then they ſeldom maintain this Gravity thoroughly: They grow weary, I ſuppoſe of being

what in Reality they are not, and ſo relapſe into Levities, which diſcover them to be but imperfect Copies of the Compleat Man.

Auth. TIME, you ſee is a great Remedy for the want of Age and Experience.

Don Man. NOTHING but that can cure Infancy and Youth, which are really Ages of Imperfection in every Reſpect. In a more advanced Age our Thoughts are ſolid and elevated, our Underſtanding enlarged and free, our Judgment ſound, our Minds reaſonable, our diſcerning juſt, our Taſte certain; the Heart becomes great and ſteady, the Senſes maſculine and vigorous, the Deſires noble, and the Diſpoſitions regular and wiſe. When a Man is thus brought by Time to the Pitch of his Perfection, he becomes an uſeful and neceſſary Member of the civil Body. He aſſiſts others with ſalutary Counſels, perſuades them by judicious Arguments, animates them by his experimental Knowledge, inſtructs and delights them by his refined Taſte and correct Diſcernment. In a Word, whatever he thinks, ſays, or does, ſhews him to be arrived at the Point of human Perfection.

Auth. WE have a long Way to travel before we reach that Point. How long is the Soul impriſoned, as it were, in the dark Manſion of our mortal Body! Where the Taper of Reaſon gives but a dim and diſtant Light, and, though it be all the Light the other Faculties have to go by, yet ſhines not in its full Strength and Brightneſs till after a Series of dark and gloomy Years. And when the Mind, Apprehenſion, Judgment, Will, and the Heart attempt to exert themſelves in this State of Darkneſs and Obſcurity, alas! they do but wander and miſtake their Objects, whatever Pains other People take to enlighen and conduct them.

Don

Don Man. WHAT an unhappy Thing it is for a Man of mature Senſe and Judgment to be obliged through Neceſſity or Decorum to ſuit himſelf and comply with an Age, that has ſo little of Humanity in it beſides the Figure! His Miſery, methinks, (as it is a Pain of the Mind) may not unfitly be compared with the Torment of *Phalaris*'s Bull.

Auth. THE Compariſon is unnatural. However when a Man has brought himſelf by Time and Study to Perfection, he then reflects and looks back upon his paſt Miſeries: He commiſerates the State of Imbecility, Ignorance, and Darkneſs, from which he is delivered; he condemns his own weak Underſtanding, his falſe Reaſonings, trivial thoughts, and childiſh Taſte: He reviews with Aſtoniſhment all the Miſtakes, Errors, and Wanderings of his own Heart. What a Pleaſure it is to find himſelf ſuperior to all this! To be no more the Sport of ſo many Imperfections for the Time to come!

Don. Man. But alaſs! What Numbers of People there are, that will never arrive at ſuch a Point of Perfection!

Auth. THAT is, as you obſerved before, becauſe ſomething or other is wanting in their Compoſition. Perhaps they have not a competent Taſte or Senſe; perhaps, what is ſtill worſe, they have not a competent Capacity: In ſhort I do not know what it is, but ſomething or other they are defective in.

Don. Man. IT is obvious enough they are deficient in ſome Reſpect or other, though we cannot well define what it is.

Auth. THEREFORE Time, as I ſaid before, is the grand Remedy; but yet it is not an univerſal Remedy.

Don. Man. TRUE; it does not plant happy Diſpoſitions in us; it only affords Leiſure and Opportunity

portunity for Nature to finiſh what ſhe had begun, and to reap what was of her own ſowing. But yet the natural Soil, though it be good, nay, I ſay further, though it be of equal Goodneſs, is not fruitful at the ſame Time in all that are poſſeſſed of it. In ſome, whether it be that their Education forwards it, or that it is aſſiſted by their natural Complexion, it ripens and brings forth Fruit at the proper Seaſon: In others, whether it be retarded through their Education, or neglected through the natural Indolence of their Tempers, it lies a long Time fallow and unfruitful, and produces nothing till the latter Seaſon. Now this Delay is the Root of ſtrange Prejudices, eſpecially in thoſe that ought upon Account of their Rank and Condition to be perfect Men. For the particular Perfection, that is peculiar to each Condition and Employment muſt be acquired by little and little, as well as the general Perfection that is proper for Man. I am not the more a judicious, able Magiſtrate, becauſe I wear the Gown or have a civil Employment; no more than I am a Man of Senſe, becauſe I am old enough to be ſo.

Auth. ARE not Kings and Sovereigns under the ſame Neceſſity of forming and perfecting themſelves by Degrees?

Don. Man. UNDOUBTEDLY: They are not born full Men; Men finiſhed and conſummate in Wiſdom, Experience, and a Thouſand other Qualities, that are abſolutely neceſſary for that Rank of Sovereignty, which they enjoy. Heaven indeed generally plants the Seeds of thoſe Qualities in them, but it is their Buſineſs to cultivate, improve, and perfect them, in order to act like Kings in the prudent Government of their People.

Auth. No Perſon in the World then is exempt from the Care and Pains of improving and perfecting himſelf in his Rank and Station. The General

of

of an Army acquires his Abilities at the Expence of other People's Blood, and the Hazard of his own. The Phyſician rarely recovers a Man from a mortal Diſtemper, till he has firſt ſent a great many others to their Graves. The Man of Letters does not obtain the honourable Character of a truly learned Man, but at the Expence of his Reſt and Health. And when it has coſt us all this Fatigue and Toil to make our ſelves perfect, is our Perfection after all a fixed or permanent Condition?

Don. Man. Now you touch the Sore indeed; you come to the ſad Point of human Miſery. There is nothing in this Life fixed or permanent; every Thing in it is continually changing, either growing or decaying every Moment.

Auth. And in ſuch a Manner too, that the Faculties of the Soul ſhare the Fate of the Body, be it ſound or infirm.

Don. Man. By Age the Memory decays, the Wit flags, the Imagination cools, the Taſte is impaired; all the fine Qualities of the Soul, ſavour of the Frailty and Infirmity of the Body, which in regard to them is no longer capable of diſcharging the ſame Functions. But for this very Reaſon it concerns us the more to apply our ſelves betimes to work out our Perfection, that we may both the ſooner reap and the longer enjoy the Fruits of our Labour.

Auth. By theſe Advance-ſteps in our early Years, we may acquire ſuch a rich and plentiful Stock of Merit, as not to be ſo ſenſible of thoſe Decays and Loſſes, brought upon us by Age, as you may imagine. A long accuſtomed happy Practice and Habit of improving and perfecting all the Faculties of the Soul, leaves ſuch Marks and Impreſſions behind it, as are not eaſily defaced. The Memory may grow leſs faithful as to Names, but Things and Facts it ſtill retains; the Imagination is not perhaps

perhaps ſo ſprightly, but Reaſon and Judgment underſtand her Flights, to condemn them if wild, and to admire them if regular. The Taſte may be ſomewhat ſuperannuated as to the compoſing of briſk and lively Things, Works of Wit and Fancy; but yet it reliſhes what is good and excellent in others. In ſhort the Luſtre and Beauty perhaps are paſt, but all the Subſtance and Solidity remain. Yet all this while I do not grant, that even theſe little Impairings, ſmall as they are, happen to all antient People. There are a great many who maintain their Merit and Perfection to the laſt.

Don Man. It is no eaſy Matter to prevent and out-run our Years in ſuch a Manner as you mean; to riſe to the higheſt Pitch of Perfection and then to maintain our Poſt.

Auth. The Way is from our Youth upwards to employ all the Hours of our Time, and uſe all our Endeavours to improve the Talents and Gifts of Nature. The Study of the beſt Authors, whether of Letters, Politicks, Wars or Judicature, *&c.* The Converſation of judicious, able Men in thoſe different Arts and Employments; frequent Reflexion, deep and intenſe Thinking, Experience, Cuſtom, Practice and Exerciſe; this is the Way to give the finiſhing Stroke to the Work, which Nature, though never ſo bountiful to us, did but roughly deſign.

Don Man. A Person that is arrived at ſuch a Pitch is invaluable.

Auth. He is indeed above all the Eſteem that can poſſibly be ſhewn him.

Don Man. How delightful and improving is ſuch a one's Converſation! And if a Man has the Happineſs to gain his Friendſhip, he then has an Inſtructor, whoſe Principles are deduced from the ſoundeſt Reaſon and moſt exquiſite Taſte; a Guide, whoſe

whoſe Counſels reſult from the cleareſt Judgment and moſt conſummate Experience; and above all, a Friend, whoſe Heart exempt and free from all Weakneſs and Inſtability, bears him an inviolable Affection and unchangeable Attachment.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Genius for Politeneſs and Order.

ART, which improves, embelliſhes, and perfects every Thing in Nature, is, if I may uſe the Metaphor, the Parent of Politeneſs. Politeneſs in its Turn raiſes and eſtabliſhes the Merit and Reputation of every Thing whatſoever. No Productions of Wit or Underſtanding can make their Fortune without its Concurrence and Aſſiſtance. I know ſeveral great Genius's both for Invention and Judgment, that are ſo aukward and unpoliſhed in other Reſpects, that one would rather think them worthy of Contempt, than Commendation. Nay, the moſt rational Diſcourſe, the moſt learned Book, the greateſt Eloquence, the profoundeſt Erudition, all this, I ſay, if the Ornaments of Politeneſs be wanting, will be only looked upon as barbarous Pedantry, whoſe mildeſt Fate is Neglect and Oblivion. Others we know, who, were they narrowly inſpected, are no great Genius's, nor extraordinary Perſons; and yet they have a Reputation and Character in the World, which entirely proceeds from a certain Politeneſs of Mind and Underſtanding. The ſame Thing may be ſaid of the Qualities of our Bodies, which loſe their Value, if they be not accompanied with a proper Politeneſs. A Man of a homely Perſon, if his Carriage be graceful, and his Deportment courteous, is infinitely preferable to a handſome Man of rough, clowniſh Airs, and an unpoliſhed Behaviour.

Behaviour. The latter is really offenſive, becauſe we ſuſpect there is a certain Vain-glory in his Unpoliteneſs. In Truth, Merit, whether great or ſmall, real or imaginary, is never free from Vanity, unleſs it be guarded and defended by Virtue. Now they that are moſt addicted to Preſumption, and conſequently the leaſt ſuſceptible of Civility, are generally thoſe that have ſome eminent Advantage or Perfection of Body: Little Souls, that are afraid an obliging Behaviour would diſparage and undervalue them, ſo ſtupidly and exceſſively arrogant that they never think you ſhew them Deference enough; and ſo indolent withal, that they have no Attention for any Thing but their own Perſons, and will give themſelves no Manner of Trouble in Regard to any body elſe. Thus Vain-glory, grafted upon Self-love, is the Root of all their Unpoliteneſs and Ill-breeding. Yet if they would open their Eyes to their true Intereſt, they might perceive that Politeneſs adorns the Merit a Man has, as well as ſupplies the Want of what he has not. There are vaſt Numbers of People in the World, that only by this ſingle Qualification keep themſelves out of the Catalogue of Fools. But when this Politeneſs of Deportment reſults from a Politeneſs of Underſtanding, then it is not confined to a Man's Perſon alone, but is diffuſed throughout every Thing about him. It is viſible in the Decency and Suitableneſs of his Furniture, the Taſte of his Pictures, and the Choice of his Books, though he be not a Man of Letters by Profeſſion; in a Word, it appears in a thouſand Things that are for his Uſe, whatever Condition of Life he is in.

FARTHER, true Virtue never departs or deviates from the Laws of Politeneſs; ſhe obſerves them perhaps with more Exactneſs and Regularity, than an aſſiduous Courtier does in his Approaches

to his Prince. Her Politeneſs is a modeſt, affable Good-breeding that ſprings from a general Regard for all Mankind, accommodates and ſuits it ſelf to all Perſons according to their Rank, complies with the lawful Cuſtoms and innocent Recreations of honeſt civilized People, is not ſtartled to ſee Religion or good Manners reverenced, puts on no authoritative Airs of Gravity, unleſs at the Violation of ſome moral Duty; but in ſhort makes the good and virtuous Man an agreeable amiable Character. If on the contrary Virtue be ſtripped of this Politeneſs, and ſhewn only in the Garb of an unpoliſhed Auſterity, in Spite of all a Man's Religion and good Senſe, he will be apt to look upon her as odious and unamiable.

Now what is Politeneſs in Regard to all thoſe Works in general, that are under the Direction of Art? It is an elegant Diſpoſition of the Things that are to bear a Relation to one another. The Perfection of the Whole conſiſts in the juſt ordering of all the ſeveral Parts. A Man would be a Monſter in Nature, if his Head was in the Place of his Feet; and ſo in a Work of the Underſtanding, or in a Piece of Mechaniſm, if the Beginning be placed at the End, it will be a Monſter in Art. Every Thing muſt have its proper Place aſſigned it in the Order of Art, as it has that of Nature: Place it not there, it is ſhocking; place it there, it is agreeable: It will at leaſt be thought worthleſs and uſeleſs elſewhere; there it will always bear its Price and Value. All Diſorder produces Confuſion, and Confuſion both diſcredits its Author, and offends the Eye. Let a Man expoſe to our View the fineſt Things in the World, confuſedly jumbled and heaped together, we ſhall retain no other Idea of them, but that of a Chaos or unformed Maſs, of which we have no diſtinct Conception. Let

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the ſame Things be reduced every one to its Place, every one to its proper Point of View, and the Juſtneſs and Elegance of that Order and Diſpoſition, joined to the intrinſick Worth and Beauty of Things, will charm us. It is to little Purpoſe a great many Orators, Poets and Writers, dull and clouded Underſtandings, labour to find out a Subject ſuſceptible of all the Ornaments of Art. When they have been ſo happy as to meet with ſuch a Subject, are they as happy in acquitting themſelves upon it? In order to manage and conduct a Subject rightly, they ſhould underſtand all its different Parts, aſſign each of them its proper Place, give it the exact Extent that is requiſite, and connect them all together with ſuch a ſuitable Coherence, that not one of them could be diſplaced without diſfiguring and mutilating the Whole. This is that elegant Harmony, which a thouſand Authors, that are neither deficient in Parts, Induſtry, nor Emulation, either do not conſider, or are not able to obſerve. Read their Works, you ſhall find Learning and Variety, elevated Thoughts, ſtrong Arguments, and wiſe Maxims, yet all this ſhall be like ſo many diſunited Members, or diſlocated Limbs without Joints, and without Proportion. All is thrown promiſcuouſly and confuſedly together, as if it were an heap of Materials, that waited for ſome other Pen to put them into Form and Order.

Now it is eaſy to apprehend, that a Delicacy as to Order, is no leſs eſſential to an Author in his Sentiments, than in his Thoughts. The Rules of Art, and the Laws of Nature, are the ſame with Reſpect to the one and the other. The Sentiments, as well as the Reaſonings, muſt be ſuitable to the Subject, conſiſtent and coherent with one another, that they may have their proper influence, which is to touch and affect the Heart with ſuch Diſpoſi-

tions and Impreſſions, as the Author intended. Not that a Sentiment or a Reflection, which appears ſingle and unconnected, is always againſt Rule, for that Reflection may be a Sentence or Maxim; and that Sentiment, a ſudden Tranſport. Both the one and the other in ſome Circumſtances, and upon ſome certain Occaſions, may be convenient, provided they riſe naturally from the Subject, or at leaſt be related to it. But then this is a nice Point; the very Thing wherein the Difficulty lies *(viz.)* that our Sentiments always flow from the Matter in Hand, as from their proper Fountain; otherwiſe they are but ſo many wild Flights in the Air, mere Wanderings and Deviations, whoſe Impropriety will appear to every Reader. For all People have common Senſe, though they have not Judgment to know exactly when a Thought is in its proper Place, and when not.

The good Taſte, the Decorum, the *je ne ſçay quoy*, or the inexpreſſible ſomething muſt all concur to make up that elegant Coincidence and Agreement, from whence the beautiful Order and Politeneſs reſult, which charm us in all the perfect Works of Art. But how little were theſe Rules, which are the latter Effects of Reflection, obſerved in antient Times! In the Beginning, a ſavage brutal Rudeneſs reigned throughout the Univerſe: Mankind ſtood in Need of whole Ages and Centuries even to make them perceive their own Ignorance and Barbarity. The *Grecians* were the firſt who became ſenſible of both, and endeavoured to introduce a Politeneſs amongſt themſelves in the Beginning of their Empire. They began with the building of Cities, Temples, and Palaces according to the Rules of Art; it was from theſe ingenious and induſtrious Men that we derived the three Orders of Architecture, in which the Beauty of ſo many magnificent Structures conſiſts. But they

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applied themſelves with ſtill greater Vigour to the Study of Letters, which by Degrees formed and poliſhed their Underſtanding, and gave it all its Perfection and Beauty. They erected publick Academies to train up their Countrymen to Sciences, and admitted ſuch Foreigners too, as were deſirous of coming thither for Education. In one Word they became Men by knowing how to become learned and polite.

For a long Time they looked upon all other Nations but their own, as barbarous and uncivilized.

Immediately after the *Grecians*, the *Romans* likewiſe freed themſelves from the Barbarity and Rudeneſs of former Ages. Politeneſs of all Kinds quickly ſpread it ſelf as wide as the Bounds of their Empire, comprehending the greateſt Part of the World, which all became ſubject to theſe perpetual univerſal Conquerors. They had no Reaſon long to envy *Greece* her Arts and Sciences; in a few Years they carried them to a Pitch of Excellence, ſufficient to inſpire their Models with Jealouſy. In the firſt Place as to Arts, there are ſtill ſome Fragments of curious *Roman* Architecture in Being, which no other Nation has ſince been able to equal. Skilful Artiſts diſcover in theſe valuable Remains ſomething ſo exquiſitely beautiful and inimitable, that it charms them beyond all Hopes of attaining to an equal Perfection. They are forced to ſay of them, as the greateſt Encomium that can be given, it is the Work of the antient *Romans*. We have likewiſe ſome of their Statues, whoſe excellent aſtoniſhing Workmanſhip will both immortalize the Artiſts that made them, and the Heroes they repreſent. Their Money too was ſtruck with ſuch a Stamp, as ſhews that an univerſal good Taſte prevailed amongſt them, and

that every particular Thing bore the Signet and Impreſs of it.

The famous Cloſet of my illuſtrious Friend *Don Juam Laſtanoſa*, is a kind of *Aſylum* to great Numbers of theſe *Athenian* and *Roman* Curioſities. There you ſee Medals, Coins, Statues, Urns, and a Thouſand other Rarities of Antiquity; Works, which all modern Founders and Sculptors will always admire, and leave the Reputation of being the Maſter-pieces of Art in their everlaſting Poſſeſſion. Yes, it is at this Friend's Houſe you will find the Treaſure of Antiquity, on Account of the many Monuments of it which he preſerves; and the Honour of *Arragon*, on Account of his own fine Talents, which you will find capable of ſatisfying the moſt critical and inſatiable Curioſity. In the Works of this excellent and uncommon Genius you will meet with all the elegant Taſte and polite Learning of the Antients.

But though the *Romans* improved and embelliſhed Art to this laſt Degree of Perfection, which we vainly ſtrive to come up to, yet that was but an appendant Circumſtance, as it were, of their Merit. It was in Literature their true, their eſſential Glory conſiſted. In their Authors of the firſt Claſs a Man can never be weary of admiring the natural Concatenation and Coherence of their Thoughts and Sentiments, their clear reſplendent Reaſon, their ſound and ſtrong Judgment, their fruitful and regular Imagination: There you ſee the ſolid, the ſublime, the beautiful, the bright, and the true fine Genius, the juſt indiſputable Taſte, the *je ne ſçay quoy*, the inexpreſſible peculiar Charm in every Kind of Writing, that exact Point of Perfection, which leaves nothing to be wiſhed for, which impoſes Silence upon all the *Zoilus*'s and *Ariſtarchus*'s, all the carping Cenſors and Criticks in the World. And though antient *Rome* be

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now no more, yet *Rome*'s Politeneſs in Arts and Literature in ſome Meaſure ſurvives; the beſt Part of it ſtill ſubſiſts to this Day; every Nation has inherited, preſerved and cultivated its Share.

ITALY is diſtinguiſhed for the Delicacy of its Pencil and Chizel, for the Magnificence of its Buildings, the regular Beauty of its Cities, and her Genius for Policy and Government. In *Spain* we are more diligent to adorn our Minds than our Cities; though, I confeſs, that Negligence is no Matter of Commendation; for, I think, all Unpoliteneſs whatſoever, even in Things of the ſmalleſt Conſequence, is always a Fault. *France* is the Center of Politeneſs in every Reſpect; there Arts and Sciences are in Vogue and Reputation; there they are cultivated and improved every Day: Even their Nobility, who are polite to the laſt Degree in their Manners and Behaviour, both delight and make great Proficiency in polite Learning; they are convinced, that Knowledge can never be prejudicial, but is always of Uſe, whatever Station a Man is in, or whatever Profeſſion he is of. Amongſt great Numbers of learned Men of that Nation, I know one Gentleman in particular, that has all the good Taſte and Genius imaginable, as is evident from his two Libraries, one of which conſiſts of an excellent Collection of the beſt Authors, and the other of his own Writings and Performances. This illuſtrious Scholar I ſpeak of is Monſieur *Filleau*, Canon of the Cathedral Church of *Touloufe*.

But to return; Inſtruction and Delight are the Fruits of Politeneſs and Order. After a Man has made a good Choice of Flowers and Plants, that which compleats the Uſefulneſs and Pleaſure of his Garden, is the Diſpoſition and Cultivation of thoſe Plants and Flowers. The ſame Thing may be ſaid in ſome Sort with Reſpect to every Production

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of the Underſtanding. After a judicious Choice of the Subjects and Materials, that, which both delights and inſtructs, is the Order and Politeneſs obſerved through the whole. But there are ſome People exact and elegant in their Nature, that are leſs indebted to Art, than the reſt of Mankind, and generally obſerve Order and Politeneſs in all they do. Not the leaſt Negligence ſlips from them in any of their Works, nor the minuteſt Impropriety in any Thing whatſoever. Their Diſcourſe, their Actions, Manners and Behaviour are always accompanied with an eaſy, natural and graceful Air. *Alexander*, according to *Quintus Curtius*, was a great Lover and a moſt rigid Obſerver of Order, even amongſt his Troops; they were more like Ranks of formal Senators, ſays that Hiſtorian, than Files of fiery Soldiers.

THERE are others on the contrary, that are naturally perplexed and confuſed, and conſequently will never be capable of Politeneſs and Order, which require a great deal of Attention and Exactneſs. Their Words are thrown at Random without Coherence; their Ways and Manners negligent, unpolite and rude; whatever comes from them as a Production of their Underſtanding is without Taſte or Choice, Rule or Form. In ſhort Politeneſs, as it is inſeparable from Order, ſuppoſes a larger Capacity than perhaps People imagine; in my Opinion, it requires a nice and comprehenſive Judgment to give every Thing an appoſite, well-placed Elegance in its Kind. This Politeneſs, if we may believe the Story, was the firſt Step, by which *Taycoſama* aſcended to the Throne of *Japan*. This Fact will deſerve the more Credit, if we conſider, what is certainly true, that the *Japaneſe* are the moſt polite and regular People in the World. It was remarked of this *Taycoſama*, who was a Domeſtick to one of the

the Court-Lords, that he had a ſingular Elegance in his Diſcourſe, and a wonderful Genius for Order, which exceedingly ſet off the meaneſt and commoneſt Offices of his Function. Theſe Talents inſenſibly induced People to think, that *Taycoſama* was born for ſomething better than Servitude; and theſe Prepoſſeſſions in his Favour ſtill increaſed, of which he was not ignorant.

At Length by a ſtrange Turn and Revolution of Fortune, the Domeſtick in Competition with his Sovereign carried the Day; and ſo became Lord and Maſter by Means of thoſe firſt Prejudices in Favour of his Merit.

This is a Picture of compleat Order and Politeneſs in all Reſpects. It is that which the Graces drew, after they had ſeen a Model of it in the Perſon of the Count *d'Oropeſa*, the moſt polite, the moſt affable, the wiſeſt, and moſt accompliſhed, and in a Word, the compleateſt, fineſt Gentleman of the Age he lived in.

CHAP. XIX.

The judicious and critical Man.

Momus, be it ſpoken without Offence, did not Reaſon like a God, when he deſired to have a little Window made into the Heart of Man! It was Fancy, not Reaſon, that induced him to make this idle Wiſh. He ſhould have conſidered, that there are *Lynceus's* amongſt us Mortals, who with their own Eyes can penetrate to the Bottom of the human Soul. No; there is no Neceſſity, that Mens Hearts ſhould be made tranſparent for us to ſee into them. A Man may find out a Key: he may open it and enter in by the force of judicious Reflexions.

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A MAN of judgment and critical Diſcernment, which are two Qualities more rare and uncommon than is generally thought, eaſily becomes Maſter of the Object, he applies himſelf to. He is an *Argus* at Obſervation, and a *Lynceus* at Penetration, his piercing Attention quickly ſounds a Man's Bottom; his great Inſight, by Degrees, diſcloſes all his Foldings, Windings and Receſſes; his Judgment equitably meaſures the Extent of his Capacity; and his unbiaſſed Integrity makes a Deciſion without Prejudice or Partiality, either for or againſt him. Before theſe Eyes the Impoſtor ſtrives in vain to maſk his Knavery, and the Fool to conceal his Ignorance under the Cloak of Gravity and Silence. Both the one and the other are quickly ſeen into, fathomed and detected.

EVERY great Man has a great deal of Judgment and critical Diſcerning; and whoever has a great ſhare of both theſe, will always be a great Man. For the excellent Qualities of the Soul are generally united and go together, when a Man poſſeſſes any one in an eminent Degree. Reflexion is an eſſential Part of that ſuperior Merit I am ſpeaking of; but that is not ſufficient of it ſelf. For an ordinary Genius is often capable of much Reflexion. That, which I require then, is a Penetration of Judgment, that ſearches and pries into the very Bottom of Things, anatomizes, as it were, their ſeveral Parts, and thoroughly views their Combination and Contexture; and a critical Juſtneſs of Eſtimation that rates them according to their exact Value, and gives them their due Portion of Eſteem or Contempt. To this End a Man muſt firſt of all diſtinguiſh well between Reality and Appearance. The one ſo often ſubſtitutes it ſelf into the Place of the other in order to impoſe upon us, or reſembles the other ſo much without endeavouring to deceive us, that it is very eaſy to miſtake

miſtake the one for the other. But the great Man does not ſuffer himſelf to be impoſed upon, or influenced by Appearances. On the contrary he knows how to act ſuperior to their Suggeſtions, to ſet aſide their Impreſſions, and to give his Judgment abſtracted from their Influence. He, not at all moved with a ſuperficial out-ſide Beauty, which dazzles vulgar Minds, lays hold upon the Subſtance, and reſts there. He conſiders the Thing in it ſelf, and makes it paſs the Judgment of his critical Tribunal, in order to ſeparate the falſe from the true.

It belongs to Genius's of this Claſs to ſtudy and to know Men, becauſe it is their peculiar Happineſs to have Talents fit for that Purpoſe. They can trace and purſue a Man's Character and Nature Step by Step; and when they have once reached that, they will come to the reſt without much Difficulty; that is, with this fundamental Knowledge of the Man they will penetrate even into his Views and Deſigns, or at leaſt they will draw ſuch Concluſions, and form ſuch ſtrong Conjectures, that they ſhall rarely be miſtaken in the Event. In ſhort, is not the natural Temper of every one of us the Spring that ſets us a going, eſpecially in regard to Things we are moſt intereſted in, or concerned about? Thus when a Man has the Sagacity rightly to hit and diſcover our Nature, he perceives by our Proceedings what it is we have in our Minds and Intentions.

It was this underſtanding of Characters, that made *Tacitus* and *Seneca* ſo eminent and famous. The one confined himſelf to the Knowledge of particular Perſons; the other took a larger Scope, and aimed at the general Knowledge of Mankind. This is undoubtedly that Talent, which is leaſt of all compatible or conſiſtent with ordinary Underſtandings. And they, for whom it is reſerved, are

are worthy to be regiſtered in the Catalogue of the Wiſe. The Generality of Men are commonly clear-ſighted enough in ſome certain Things; becauſe Ill-nature will ſufficiently enable them to diſcover them. But are they for that Reaſon the more judicious? No; ſome of them indeed will talk upon every Subject. But do they apprehend what they ſay? No. They have got a certain Rote by the frequent Hearing of the ſame Things diſcourſed of in their daily Converſation: This furniſhes them with proper Terms, which they repeat without well underſtanding their Meaning. They fathom nothing: They do not examine the Relation one Thing bears to another: They do not diſtinguiſh between Truth and Shadow, Reality and Appearance; but reſting ſuperficially upon the Bark, as it were, they peremptorily pronounce the Tree to be good or bad.

But when and upon what Occaſions is it, that this whole Talent of knowing Men is exerted and diſplayed? It is when two adepts of this Kind attack one another upon equal Terms, mutually reſolving not to quit, till they have grazed at leaſt upon ſome Part or other. What dexterous Artifice and Management on both Sides, in order to ſound one another! What ſubtle Fetches, and delicate Efforts to get the firſt Hold! What Warineſs and Circumſpection in their Words, all numbered and meaſured, as it were, with a Compaſs! What Vigilance, Attention, and artful Contrivance in their Reaſonings, Sentiments and every Thing elſe! And yet it is not a Word or a Hint, which happens to fall, that will fix their Judgment. Their curious and critical Wiſdom muſt have ſtronger Proofs, better Securities than theſe firſt Eſſays, in Order to be aſſured of their Bottom, when they are endeavouring to penetrate the Character of a great Man. Such ſmall Hints and

Eſſays

Eſſays are too equivocal, ambiguous, and uncertain.

There are none but ſuperficial preſumptuous People, that decide upon a Character from ſuch ſlight Indications. They do not conſider, that theſe are only imperfect Sketches, which repreſent nothing; like Common-place in a Diſcourſe, that points out no particular Perſon; or like general Circumſtances that ſuit with every Body, but characterize no Body in particular. Theſe weak Judgments fall by this Means into a thouſand groſs Miſtakes in their Conduct, and are daily bubbled by thoſe whom they know perfectly well in their own Conceit.

Profound Genius's always aim at two eſſential Points, which certainly lead them to a thorough Knowledge of their Object. They remark, as we ſaid before, both the Reaſonings and Sentiments of their Man. Theſe they weigh, compare, and put together at their Leiſure, and in private. For the proper Merit of every particular Man reſults equally from his Underſtanding and his Heart, caſt and turned in ſuch a Manner, as is peculiar to him, and diſtinguiſhes him from others. Moreover, in Proportion as a Character is the more difficult to be underſtood, by Reaſon either of the Depth or the Inconſtancy of the Subject, they ſuſpend their Judgments, and doubly exert their Attention, Vigilance and Criticks. They trace and purſue the Character, till they have fully and exactly diſcovered it.

Happy is that Man, who has one of theſe profound Scrutinizers in the Number of his Friends; for it muſt be upon the Aſſurance of a ſtaunch and well-tryed Friendſhip, that they open and communicate their Minds and Sentiments. They are infinitely reſerved and cautious in their Diſcourſe; and that, which they are quick at finding

out, they are very ſlow at revealing. They have likewiſe another Maxim, which is to ſpeak in the ordinary Language and Way of the People, though they think in a very different Manner. But when they are well aſſured of the Diſcretion of a ſolid Friend, then they explain and unboſom themſelves without Reſerve. How many Things do they diſcloſe and communicate, that he was ignorant of before! what a copious Intelligence do they afford him! They aſſign to every Man his proper Attribute, to every noble Exploit its juſt Merit, to every ingenious Performance its true Value, to every Action its exact Worth, and to every Motive its proper Qualification and Character. How prodigiouſly is a Man ſurprized to find that nothing has been able to deceive them! that neither the moſt diſſembling hypocritical Spirit, nor the profoundeſt unfathomable Temper has been a ſufficient Rampart againſt their Penetration! He admires the Extent of their Attention, the Vigour of their Apprehenſion, the Wiſdom of their Reaſonings, the Depth of their Reflections, and the Juſtneſs of their Diſcernment and Obſervations. He is aſtoniſhed to find that, of the infinite Variety and Multiplicity of Things which have occurred to them, there is not one but what they have rightly hit and judged of, and what every body muſt approve of after them, that has any Underſtanding.

Even the trueſt and beſt-grounded Merit trembles in the Preſence of theſe Firſt-rate Judges. A Man's Self-ſufficiency ſinks at the Sight of them; his Complacency in himſelf leſſens immediately; his Self-love is humbled, ſilenced and chilled, becauſe he is ſenſible what Tribunal he ſtands before. In ſhort, the critical Exactneſs of theſe clear-ſighted Judges is, as it were, the Touchſtone of Merit. A Man is ſure of having,

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at leaſt of deſerving an univerſal Eſteem, if he has been able to ſtand this Teſt. One Suffrage of ſuch Weight is a ſtronger Atteſtation of his Merit, than the general Approbation of a whole People (properly ſo called) either in Point of Learning or Politicks. It is true, the laſt is more diffuſive; but will it be more permanent and laſting? It is very often nothing but the fantaſtick Effect of a ſudden ſuggeſted Applauſe, quickly toſſed from Hand to Hand without their knowing why, or how. But this Chance-reputation, this arbitrary mercenary Eſteem having no Foundation, quickly belies and deſtroys itſelf, and the adored Idol infallibly falls into Diſgrace: I repeat it again; the Approbation of one ſingle, penetrating critical Man is always preferable to, and will ſooner or later prevail over all the Acclamations of vulgar Mouths. To ſuch a Man alone, for Example, an Author may aſcribe his whole Reputation; as *Plato* did, who called *Ariſtotle* his whole Academy; and as *Antigonus*, who called *Zeno* the Theatre of his Fame.

But to ſupport and maintain the Character of a judicious Critick, it is not ſufficient that he has all the forementioned Perfections, he muſt moreover continually guard and preſerve himſelf from theſe three Failings and Imperfections, *viz.* too nice a Refinement in his Penetration, Levity in his Judgment, and Inſtability in his Principles. He muſt not ſqueeze more Intelligence out of a Thing, than it really affords; to go farther is to give into Chimera. He muſt never paſs his Judgment till he has well weighed and conſidered the Matter, be he never ſo diſcerning: For a Judgment at Sight, or off-hand, runs the Hazard of miſſing the Mark in a thouſand Occurrences. Laſtly, he muſt not vary in his Principles, becauſe they are, or ſhould be, certain. To depart from

them, or to remit any Thing of them, is Treachery againſt Reaſon: It is a Weakneſs that confounds us with the fickle Rabble, and throws us into the Slavery of Complaiſance or Prejudice.

Here we are to obſerve, that there is a wide Difference between the critical and the ſatyrical Genius. The Man who ſets up for a Satyriſt, from that Inſtant makes a Vow of Malice and Ill-nature; whereas the Critick has no other Aim but to diſtinguiſh Truth from Falſhood. The one neither ſpeaks nor writes but to revile; and the other only to inſtruct. The one blames the good, almoſt as often as the bad; the other always renders the Juſtice that is due both to good and bad. Therefore far be it from me to pretend that the Critick muſt be ill-natured, though I would have him very clear-ſighted. Theſe two Characters are far from being inſeparable. If he be penetrating, as I deſire him, he will not approve of every Thing; in that he would ceaſe to be what I ſuppoſe him: Neither will he for the ſame Reaſon condemn every Thing, for then he would become an *Ariſtarchus*.

There are ſome People that hunt after all the bad that is to be found in every Thing they meet with. They gather and pick it out amongſt the Good, from which they carefully ſeparate it, that they may have nothing but a pure Stock of Evil to work up into Miſchief againſt Mankind: Vipers, that breathe and exhale nothing but Gall! Publick Peſts, which every City in the World, as ſoon as it knows they are within its Walls, ought inſtantly to ſpue out. To theſe ulcerated malignant Spiris, I oppoſe judicious Criticks without Venom, and without Paſſion. Theſe latter are the Depoſitories of what is good and true. It is the Office of theſe equitable Judges to underſtand it, and to impoſe it upon others as a Law. They

are,

are, its true, very reſerved, leſt they ſhould commit Truth to Ignorance, which would be never the better for it; to Malice, which would poiſon it; or to Indiſcretion, which would publiſh it perhaps impertinently or unſeaſonably. But when theſe wiſe and able Men, free from all Fears and Doubts, mutually communicate their Knowledge to one another; their Converſation is then worthy to be engraven in the Temple of Memory, worthy of the Muſes, the Graces, and *Minerva*.

This critical Faculty, ſo glorious to Reaſon, ſo neceſſary in our Conduct, and ſo advantageous to Learning, is an eſſential Quality to thoſe that are deſigned for Government. It is the Light which directs them to the Talents ſuitable to their various Employments; the Standard, by which they meaſure the Extent of thoſe Talents; the Scales, wherein they weigh People's Services in Order to adjuſt and proportion their Rewards; the Touch-ſtone, by which, on nice Occaſions, and in delicate Circumſtances, they try the Fidelity and Attachment of their Dependants and Inferiors. Thus the great Men place every one, where he ought to be; becauſe they know his Strength and his Weakneſs, the much or the little, that Experience will enable him to perform. With them an Affection for a Subject, or a Servant, is never the Motive of raiſing him to a higher Rank. Choice alone, founded upon the Congruity between the Perſon and the Rank, determines them. They are always guarded againſt Paſſion and Surprize, thoſe two fatal Rocks to Civil Government. To be ſurprized is to be deceived by others; to act by Paſſion is conſenting to deceive ourſelves. The one is the Want of Fore-ſight, the other is Weakneſs: A double Unhappineſs, which a ſteddy vigilant Reaſon is a Stranger to.

O HOW valuable is this Talent, this clear, penetrating Reason, purged from all Paſſion, free, independant, ſuperior to all Impreſſions of the Senſes, which impoſe upon weak and ignorant Men in their Judgment and Eſtimation of every Thing in the World! Truth then diſcovering itſelf openly and without a Veil, he ſees it immediately, and cleaves to that only. Not but he may ſometimes find in himſelf a certain Affection for ſome particular Object, that is not unworthy of it. But then that Affection does not bias his Reaſon to that Side, at leaſt it never over-rules it. He curbs and reſtrains the Affection, be it never ſo reaſonable or well-grounded, leaſt it ſhould grow otherwiſe by imperceptible Degrees. He does yet more, if it be needful, he diſſembles and conceals it, as a Secret not to be diſcloſed without ill Conſequences.

As to private Perſons, their Affections, or rather Friendſhips, may appear openly without any bad Conſequence, amongſt honeſt People, as I ſuppoſe them to be. But the Choice of our Friends is ſtill another important Object, and another conſiderable Advantage of a critical Underſtanding. To avoid Repetition upon this Article, I ſhall only lay down this general Principle, *That in the Caſe of Friends the Refuſe and Trumpery is ſo numerous, that we have only a few left to chuſe out of:* And in this chuſing and culling, we have Occaſion for all our Wits and Abilities.

THERE is a certain Game, at which the Succeſs depends very much upon our Skill in Diſcarding; the ſame Art will enable us to ſucceed in the Choice of our Friends.

ALL this Diſcourſe is but a faithful Abridgment of the frequent Converſations I have had with the Duke of *Ixar*, Heir to the admirable Qualities of Body and Mind, that are peculiar to that illuſtrious Family.

Family. I do but repeat after that Oracle of Understanding.

CHAP. XX.

The pretending Coxcomb. A Satyr.

WHAT an excellent Master was that Philosopher who began his Instructions by teaching his Disciples to un-learn. *Forget what you know*, was the first Axiom he delivered to his Pupils. Such an Ignorance as he intended is certainly of as much Importance as Knowledge. The Meaning then of this seeming Paradox of *Antisthenes* is, that we should immediately apply ourselves to unlearn the Lessons of Vice, that we may be the more capable afterwards of learning the Lessons of Virtue, that we should instantly divest our selves of our Imperfections, in Order to become the more susceptible of Perfections.

UNDOUBTEDLY it is a very commendable Thing to aspire after the noblest Attainments, and the most illustrious Perfections; but, in my Opinion, it is yet more laudable and glorious not to fall into mean Faults and vulgar Imperfections. Any one of those Imperfections is sufficient to eclipse the most shining Qualities, whilst all those united together would not be able to cover or deface that single Imperfection. One ugly Feature in the Face of the handsomest Man living, will go nigh to disfigure all his other Features, though never so fine and regular, and to bring upon him the lamentable Character of being one of Nature's Favourites in Disgrace.

I CONFESS a moderate Share of Wisdom will easily preserve us from gross and scandalous Enormities. But that is not the Case with many other Vices, which assume an Air of Merit, and are coun-

countenanced and authorized, as it were, by the Examples of Men of Reputation and Figure. The vain-glorious Coxcomb is one of these Graduates, (if I may use that Metaphor) who prides himself in a dignified Imperfection. This is a Vice that insinuates itself into the Learned, into Armies, into Preferments and Posts of Honour, and even into the Bosom of Virtue itself. It steals into the very Hearts of those that are almost the Heroes of the Age; but from that Moment they forfeit their Title to that glorious Distinction.

The general Character of the Coxcomb is to be more ambitious of having, than of deserving Praise; to arrogate to himself the Merit, which he has not, and to magnify to Excess the little, which he has; to be puffed up and elated with the smallest Trifles, a certain Sign that he was not born for any Thing great. He is like a weak Stomach, which is so far from being able to digest a strong substantial Food, that it is swelled and blown up with the lightest Victuals. But let us proceed to the Consideration of Particulars, in which perhaps it will not be possible to avoid all Repetition because of the near and fundamental Resemblance in the Features; or otherwise the pretending Coxcombs must not be drawn to the Life.

The first Species is of such, as I shall call busy, officious Coxcombs; because they are out of all Place, Employment, Title or Business. These are restless, turbulent Creatures, always abroad, always pretending to a Multiplicity of Affairs, when in Truth they have fewer than any Body else; for a Man is afraid to trust them with an Affair of any Importance, because naturally they are not over and above scrupulous in Point of Secrefy; neither does he think them capable of managing it, because they are not of an orderly, regular Disposition; in short one would not employ them upon any

any Account in the World, becauſe they are equally humble Servants to all Mankind. But it is to little Purpoſe, that you diſcharge them from all Buſineſs; they will be never the quieter for that, nor appear the leſs buſy and full of Employment. It is writ in the Almanack of their Lives, that they will run every Day in the Year after an Occaſion of appearing Men of Conſequence and Importance. They fatigue and torment themſelves more in the Purſuit of this Opportunity, than an incenſed Creditor would do to obtain Judgment againſt a villainous Debtor. If any trivial Affair drops by Accident into their Hands, they are blown up and ready to burſt with Vanity. Woe be to that Man, who dares pretend to Buſineſs in their Company. And this Nothing of theirs, which they pretend to be employed in, and which they will take care not to mention, is always a Matter of the greateſt Conſequence. They magnify it with a thouſand Circumſtances, and perplex it with a thouſand Incidents and Difficulties, which they ſpeak of in extravagant bombaſt Terms, and which (as they would make you believe) require the utmoſt Skill and Dexterity to unravel and bring to a good Iſſue. Mere Camelions, that feed themſelves only with Air! Triflers, whoſe only Buſineſs is to go about begging of Praiſe, and whoſe only Portion and Acquiſition is the Contempt of Mankind!

A VAIN Man, that is fond of Praiſe and Commendation is a Fool, and that is all; but a Coxcomb that extols himſelf and celebrates his own Praiſe, is both a Fool and a Fop at the ſame Time. The former is not diſagreeable to all People, becauſe he has a Sort of Modeſty and Moderation in his Behaviour, which the ſecond is entirely void of. Moreover he has the good Manners to return the Praiſe he receives, and to repay it with Intereſt.

tereſt. The other on the contrary is diſagreeable and offenſive to every Body. He is not ſatisfied with uſurping and arrogating to himſelf all thoſe Qualifications and Endowments, which every one knows he is deſtitute of; but he will likewiſe diſpute them away from others, and deprive them of the good Qualities, which they are really poſſeſſed of. Where are all the Hiſſers of the Pit? Let them be heard aloud for a Perſonage ſo worthy their Conſorts; let the Houtings of the Galleries join their ſhrill Accents; let the whole Audience point at him, and hiſs him from the Stage for ever.

THE wiſe Man endeavours to acquire Merit, not to affect it. If he be blamed, he does not much regard it, provided it be without Cauſe; if he be commended, he is not affected with it, when it is without Reaſon; and if it be upon good Grounds, he looks upon the Encomium no farther, than as it is a ſincere Teſtimony of the Truth. With that indeed he is affected; and why? Becauſe a juſt and true Praiſe animates and encourages him, and ſerves him as a Rule to proceed by in the Diſcharge of his Function. But the boaſting, pretending Coxcomb renounces all Glory that muſt be gained by Merit, and hunts only after the Tribute of it, which is Praiſe.

AFTER all this, it is not difficult to perceive from what Origin the Coxcomb's vain-glory proceeds; a Littleneſs of Soul, and a Meanneſs of Heart are the Sources of it, though ſome Perſons are willing it ſhould be derived from a leſs contemptible Extraction.

So all Originals are not the Product of *la Mancha:* Every Climate, every State and Condition has its own: And the pretending Coxcombs in particular

particular are infinitely beneath *Cervantes*'s Hero; for he was at leaſt a Perſon of Courage. Now to come to the Coxcombs in Bravery. The modern *Don Quixots* have the ill Property of the antient one, which was his chimerical Humour; but not his good Quality, which was his Valour and Bravery. But let us lay aſide Romance and conſider Realities. Who can number the Coxcombs of the Sword? There are *Phalanxes* and Battalions of them as numerous and formidable to the Eye, as the ancient *Roman* Legions. But theſe ſwaggering Blades in Effect are only terrible by their everlaſting Relations of their own ſpurious Proweſs, with which they plague and overwhelm us. They never open their Mouths but they enlarge upon that Head with all the big thundering Words and inſolent Airs imaginable, and with as much Audaciouſneſs and Aſſurance, as if we were bound on Pain of Death to believe them. One while it was in ſuch a Skirmiſh, another while in ſuch a Battle, another at ſuch a Siege they ſignalized themſelves ſo glorioufly. March, Halt, Encampments, Retreats; every Triſle they magnify and work up into famous Exploits and Triumphs, in which they themſelves undoubtedly had the largeſt Share. To what Purpoſe do all theſe oſtentatious Recitals ſerve? Why; they let us ſee that theſe Braggadochio's do not ſo much purſue Honour itſelf, as the Phantom of Honour; their Delight is not in glorious Actions, but in the vain Pleaſure of boaſting of ſuch, as they never atchieved. Thus it is, that ſo many bullying hectoring Blades have no other View but to be thought Men of Courage, that they may praiſe themſelves, and be praiſed by others. An Occaſion that has no Danger in it, is exactly pat for their Purpoſe; there they would expoſe their Perſons with wonderful

wonderful Intrepidity. And when such a one comes in their Way, it is a certain Harvest of Laurels for them, which they have most dearly purchased. They are Giants in Valour; and Heroes are but Pigmies to them. * Our great Commander who beat the *French*, that warlike Nation, will be nothing at all, if compared with these incomparable Warriors.

The third Species of pretending Coxcombs is of such, as I shall distinguish by the Name of Coxcombs in Politicks. These are always immersed in some deep abstracted Meditation, but counterfeit; always wrapped up in a gloomy Gravity, but studied; their Foreheads always contracted with Wrinkles, and their Eyes fixed and stedfast, but it is all Affectation; you would fancy by their Airs the whole Weight of a State, or the Affairs of a Kingdom, rested upon their Shoulders. What is it then these People, seemingly more busy than a first Minister, have in their Heads? Why, just nothing at all, but an ardent Desire to be thought Men of Depth, able Politicians, Genius's cut out for great Employments and important Affairs. Whereas, in Truth, an Affair of the least Consequence in the World is fittest for them; the smallest Trifle just matches their Parts and Abilities. But then they transform that Trifle into some considerable Negociation, into some Project or other of vast Moment, which very few Persons are capable of but themselves. They view every Thing in a Microscope; an Atom is a Mountain in their Eyes; a Mote is a Beam, and a Pismire a Colossus. As to their Language, it is a Sort of Cypher, altogether unintelligible. Their Words have no Connexion with, or Relation to one another, broken by frequent Stops, intermixed with Exclamations in the Air,

* The Marquis of *Torrecusa*, who relieved *Perpignan*.

Air, and concluded with a Geſture or Grimace, which in their Way implies an important Myſtery. If you will take their Word for it, they long extremely for Retirement, but they dare not hope for it conſidering the preſent Exigence of Affairs, and the indiſpenſable Neceſſity of their Service. Coxcombs, that deſerve all the Leiſure they have; ſince Leiſure, whatever they pretend, is their greateſt Puniſhment! Mere Machines of * *Gianello*, which make a great Noiſe to no Manner of Purpoſe!

Now let the Republick of Letters furniſh its Quota of Actors; for that has its Coxcombs too of more Sorts than one. I ſhall only ſingle out thoſe little unfortunate Authors, who take a vaſt deal of Pains to let the World know they are in Being. Theſe diminutive Genius's are a Sort of Emmets in the literary World. One Grain of Glory, true or falſe, is the Object of their moſt ardent Affection; and they are in a greater Buſtle and Hurry to gain that, than *Ceres*'s Magpies are to draw that Goddeſs's Chariot in a plentiful Harveſt. On this they can ſubſiſt very contented and happy, and can afford to boaſt too at every Turn of the pretended Juſtice done to their pretended Merit. Whereas it is merely to Complaiſance and good Nature, that they are indebted for ſome ſmall Pittance of Praiſe, which they extorted with their Importunity, and received as an Alms. Or perhaps this poor Grain of Praiſe, which they make ſuch a Noiſe with in all Places, was not ſo properly given them, as thrown them unthinkingly. This is the Plan, upon which they compoſe their own Panegyrick to repeat from one Circle of Company to another. Aſk them, as you would be induced

* An *Italian*, who amuſed *Charles* the Fifth with Clocks and Puppets in his Retirement.

to do by their Air of Sufficiency, what Pieces of Wit and Ingenuity are upon the Anvil, and you will find they came on Purpoſe to have their own Madrigal, Song, or Epigram admired. You will find they have read their Verſes already to a hundred Perſons, that are all pleaſed and charmed with their Poetry. Poor, inſignificant Coxcombs, like the Fowl, that diſturbed the whole Neighbourhood for an Egg; or like the Mountain, that made ſuch a loud and terrible Groaning at the Delivery of a Mouſe!

But to return; they that diſtinguiſh themſelves the moſt by their Actions, and by a laudable Superiority of Merit in any Kind, always ſignalize themſelves the moſt too by their Modeſty and Silence upon thoſe Articles. Being wholly intent upon well-doing, they leave it to others to take Care of rendering them Juſtice; and tho' they may ſometimes be forgotten for a Time, yet in the End their Actions ſpeak for them, and challenge the Praiſe, which by their own modeſt Silence and other People's Forgetfulneſs had been ſuppreſſed. 'Tis true, *Julius Cæſar* wrote his own Commentaries; but then that Hero's Modeſty in his Commentaries is equal to his Bravery: He ſeems to have undertaken that Work only, that he might leave no Room for Flattery to impoſe upon future Ages in the Matter of his Hiſtory.

'Tis therefore a conſtant evident Truth, that there is no Way to attain true Glory, but by noble and meritorious Actions; Actions, worthy to be proclaimed by the Goddeſs of a hundred Mouths. 'Tis in vain for thoſe Perſons that are deſtitute of this real acknowledged Merit, to purſue and promiſe themſelves the Reward of it. 'Tis to little Purpoſe they falſly aſcribe to themſelves illuſtrious Actions, or exalt and magnify their own baſe counterfeit Exploits; Fame will not ſpread her Wings

Wings to tranſmit them to Poſterity. And what Courſe do they take to be revenged of this equitable Goddeſs, who refuſes them her Service? Why, they betake themſelves to mercenary Pens, which they hire and purchaſe at any Rate: Theſe are to compile a Series of glorious Actions, and apply them to their Lives, which in Reality were ſpent inglorioufly, and perhaps baſely ſtained with Vices and Enormities. But the wiſe Men, whoſe Indignation riſe againſt theſe ſpurious Encomiums, quickly detect the Impoſtors, and by their faithful Account of Things prevent this Impoſition upon Poſterity, which will be ſure to degrade the Hero, and explode the Panegyriſt. Were the Actions of *Domitian* ſo many Triumphs to celebrate? They were indeed ſo many brutiſh Bravadoes. *Cæſar* and *Auguſtus* will be perpetual Objects of Admiration for Actions of a quite different Nature. And what were the noble Exploits of *Caligula* and *Nero?* Why, they were extolled and celebrated too, tho' the Death of a Beaſt, or the killing of a Deer, was the whole Matter of their Atchievement. But then it was their Money, not their Bravery, that purchaſed the Panegyrick. True Glory is not to be bought or ſold; it is always given, but it is given only to Merit.

After all, let the Men of little Merit be charmed and enamoured of themſelves, as much as they pleaſe, and not conceal it; we will excuſe that, provided they go no further; that is, provided they arrogate nothing to themſelves at the Expence of Truth. Methinks their ſlender Stock of Merit is not unworthy of Indulgence; and, if they had Senſe, they would not think otherwiſe of themſelves; they would not take ſo much Pains as they do, in the Gaiety of their Hearts to make themſelves ridiculous. However they hurt no body but themſelves; the Diſtemper they labour under

is not contagious; for Coxcombs and Impertinents that are ſo notorious and publick, are Creatures of no Conſideration or Conſequence.

But the moſt pernicious and inexcuſable Oſtentation is, when a Perſon of ſome tolerable real Merit has the Vanity to dazzle and blind credulous People with a thouſand imaginary Wonders, which he aſcribes to himſelf with a grave Air and ſerious Countenance. Every Thing that comes from him, is of the firſt Rank in its Kind: All his Actions are unparalleled Succeſſes; all his Succeſſes Miracles of Prudence; his whole Life one conſtant Series of Prodigies; every Part of it ſingular for Conduct, Proſperity, and every other Circumſtance relating to his Profeſſion. Poor, ſimple Wretches, that are deluded by the Impudence and the vaunting Words of a Coxcomb, that believe all he ſays, becauſe they themſelves are ſincere; that praiſe him to his Face, becauſe he praiſes himſelf to theirs; that applaud and extol him in publick, becauſe they are as credulous as he is vain-glorious.

Certainly a Man muſt have a very mean Soul thus to ſurprize People into Praiſe and Eſteem. As to thoſe that beſtow them upon the Impoſtor, nothing but their prodigious Simplicity can excuſe them. For to commend a Coxcomb, countenances his Arrogance and Vanity, and in ſome Sort authorizes his Uſurpation of true Merit. I own a Man is ſometimes obliged, at leaſt in Appearance, to comply with the Vanities and Oſtentation of a great Man; but whilſt he reſpects the Dignity, he laughs in his Sleeve at the Coxcomb, till he can take the Liberty to animadvert upon an Imperfection, which will always render us contemptible in the Eyes of wiſe Men.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

The Active and Intelligent Man.

THERE were once two Men, whom Nature had formed perfectly ſound; but they were afterwards ſo reduced by Misfortunes, that for procuring the Neceſſities of Life, the two were ſcarce equivalent to one. Induſtry after this made one out of the two. The Caſe in ſhort was this; the one was grown blind, and the other had loſt his Legs, when Induſtry rouſed by the Cries of Neceſſity, ſuggeſted a Remedy to their Miſery. The Remedy was mutually to help and aſſiſt each other, and to live in an equal, reciprocal Dependance upon one another. You, ſays Induſtry, that have Eyes, lend them to this blind Man; and you, that have Legs, lend them to this lame Man. The two Diſciples of Induſtry obſerved her Inſtructions. The blind Man carried the Cripple on his Back, and the Cripple guided and directed the Steps of the Blind. He without Legs, called the Blind-man his *Atlas*; and the Blind-man called the Cripple his *Apollo*. It is in the ſame Manner that Action and Intelligence ſhould reciprocally aſſiſt one another. They can do nothing ſingle and independent: But if they concur and go Hand in Hand, they are capable of every Thing, and may ſurmount the greateſt Difficulties. Intelligence enlightens and directs: Action follows its Directions and puts them in Execution. What the one has meditated ſlowly, the other diſpatches quickly; a Project contrived and formed at Leiſure by that, is carried on with Briſkneſs and Vivacity by this.

We know People enough, that are lively, enterprizing, quick and expeditious; but we know very few, that are intelligent. Not long ago, as a certain Perſon was commending one of theſe active Men, a ſage Critic anſwered with great Gravity. *The Perſon you commend would be a mighty Sovereign's able Miniſter, if he had Underſtanding equal to his Activity.* Indeed there is no relying with any Prudence or Safety, upon theſe active People, if they be left entirely to their own Counſels. For in that Caſe the moſt important Affair is like a trivial Affair left to Chance, whoſe Succeſs, if good, will be agreeable, and if bad, will be of no Prejudice. For their Way is either to execute haſtily without conſidering and chooſing the proper Meaſures, or elſe to procraſtinate and defer Execution; and then they think upon nothing but redeeming their Delay. Is this the Way to diſpatch Affairs? No. This is leaving them to all Adventures. And the worſt of all is, theſe mercurial Men will not hearken to Counſel; but act upon all Occaſions, as if it was loſing their Time to liſten to Advice.

They, that are thus hurried away by the natural Impetuoſity of their Tempers, ſeem to make no more Uſe of their Reaſon than Madmen. They run on without any Caution or Circumſpection, becauſe they apprehend no Dangers. They precipitate all their Meaſures and Proceedings, becauſe they never reaſon or reflect. For, as they have no Reflexion, ſo neither are they ſenſible that they want it. A Man that has no Eyes to ſee other Objects with, has none to ſee himſelf with.

There is another Species of lively active Men, who ſeem to be born purely to follow Orders; for their only Talent is a happy Facility and Diſpatch in the Execution of Affairs. But then it is by

by no Means proper or expedient, that they give Orders and Directions in any Enterprize whatsoever, becauſe they have an unhappy Talent both in projecting and in chooſing their Meaſures. Thus Talents are divided. This Man is a Genius of the firſt Rate; that is a Genius of the ſecond. The one is for Thought, the other for Action; one is a Man of Head, and the other a Man of Hands.

But an intelligent Man, that is not at the ſame Time an active one, is little better than a Man of Action without Underſtanding. What does it avail a blind Man to have Legs unleſs he has Eyes too to guide and direct them? And what does it avail another to have Eyes, if he has not Legs to walk with? What does the cleareſt Underſtanding ſignify, if Execution does not enſue? Or if his Steps, as is often the Caſe, run counter to his Knowledge?

Many People abound in Projects, without reſolving or fixing upon any. A fallacious Diffidence deludes them, and carries them from one Project to another, all which they ſuſpect in their Turns to be too ill-grounded and uncertain to be relyed upon. They have Penetration, 'tis true; but being always wavering and irreſolute, even when they think the beſt, they fluctuate in a perpetual Suſpence between *Yes* and *No:* They lay aſide one Deſign as ſoon as it is formed, to go upon another, which they will no more ſtick to than the former. Every Thing appears to them at the ſame Time with two different Aſpects, one of which is for their Purpoſe, and the other againſt it; they can come to no determinate Reſolution. As if the Mind of Man was never to fix upon any Thing without a mathematical Demonſtration of Succeſs.

Some Perſons do not heſitate ſo long about coming to a Reſolution: and yet they are never the more active for all that. They immediately perceive all the Advantages and Diſadvantages in an Affair; after which they determine in their Minds to reap the Benefit of their Fore-ſight. But they are dilatory Perſons, and ſpoil all with their Delays. Eagles at Penetration, they diſcover at the firſt Glance of the Eye what is moſt proper to be done; but Tortoiſes at Execution, they conſtantly loiter and lag behind. In Council they ſhine, and inſtantly hit upon the right Point of the Thing in Debate; but does Action and Execution come into Queſtion? Then they ſhrink and draw back, becauſe they hate Trouble; and in the End they fail of Succeſs, becauſe through their Indolence and Supineneſs they have neglected the proper Criſis.

There is another Species, who turn the Underſtanding Nature has given them the wrong Way. They neglect Eſſentials, to mind Circumſtantials, and have a ſtrange Repugnancy and Averſion to every Thing, which the Duty of their Station exacts from them: For a Man's Condition of Life is not always ſuitable to his Genius. And yet the Courſe theſe Perſons take, is not unattended with Difficulties; by their own Confeſſion they find and experience enough, but they ſurmount them all eaſily and chearfully; becauſe a Man always finds his Pleaſure where he places it. Thus their Indolence and Inactivity with reſpect to important Affairs only proceeds from their Averſion to them in particular, not from a Dread of all Labour and Difficulty whatſoever. A good Underſtanding is certainly a great Bleſſing; and the right Application of it is another, not inferior to the former: For upon this Application and this Turn, the Glory or Diſgrace of the fineſt Merit depends.

But

BUT farther, how unprofitable ſoever Knowledge may be without Action, yet it is undoubtedly true, that wiſe Men are more dilatory both in enterprizing and executing than others. This Dilatorineſs of theirs is in ſome Sort unavoidable; for it is the natural Effect of Reflexion, and Reflexion is their peculiar Property. As they fore-ſee all the Inconveniencies, that attend a knotty, difficult Affair, ſo they ſtudy to remove them by ſuch Means as may ſecure a happy Iſſue. This is the true Reaſon why their Activity is ſeldom equal to their Underſtanding. After all, if we muſt determine concerning the Proportion and Quantity, which ought to go together of theſe two Ingredients, they that are at the Helm of Affairs, require the larger Share of Underſtanding; and they that are at the Head of Armies, the larger Portion of Activity. But no Man can attain to the ſingular, illuſtrious Character of a Hero, unleſs he has them both in Perfection.

INDEED the main Spring of *Alexander*'s Heroiſm was a moſt lively and vigorous Activity. He conquered, as he uſed to ſay, all in a Day that he might leave nothing for the Morrow. Then where would he find Employment another Year? *Cæſar* too, that other Model of Heroiſm, rather precipitated than meditated his great Enterprizes, that neither his Glory might deter him, nor the Greatneſs of Dangers retard him. He never ſaid, *March*; but always, *Let us March*. A Word worthy ſuch a Thunderbolt of War, as he was. Activity prevails even amongſt the Brutes. It is that which has given Sovereignty to the Lion, who is not the Beaſt of greateſt Strength.

THAT which I have ſaid concerning Underſtanding and Activity, exactly characterizes and diſtinguiſhes thoſe two warlike Nations, the *Spaniſh* and *French*. Heaven ſeems purpoſely to have balanced

balanced their martial Rivalry and Emulation by the different Genius it has allotted to them. Moderation and Slowneſs are predominant in the *Spaniards*; and Fire and Briſkneſs in the *French*. A formal dilatory Prudence is the Property of the one; and a quick Apprehenſion, impatient and eager for Action, is the Character of the other: Wariness and Caution ſupply the Want of Activity in the *Spaniard*; and a happy Confidence of Succeſs ſupplies the Want of Temper and Moderation in the *French*. By this Means theſe two Nations in their Conteſts and Quarrels carry away the Victory by Turns, which delights ſometimes to be raviſhed, and ſometimes to be waited for. *Cæſar* well underſtood this Difference of their Geniuſes in War heretofore; he vanquiſhed the one by preventing them, and the other by Delays. Thus may we apply to the *Spaniſh* and *French* Nation, thoſe two famous Words of the great *Auguſtus*; *Feſtina lentè*; *Be leiſurely quick*. In this ſhort Maxim they might both find out the juſt and proper Medium in which Perfection certainly conſiſts.

But there is little Good to be had in this World without Mixture; the Bad ſeem to be continually plotting and labouring to adulterate and ſpoil it. How rare is the one, and how common is the other! Every Thing obſtructs and oppoſes the Good, every Thing promotes and facilitates the Bad. There is but one Way, and that a very difficult one too, to arrive at Succeſs, whilſt there are a thouſand eaſy and ſmooth ones, that lead us from it: That Concurrence and Coincidence of Circumſtances, which conſtitute the Goodneſs of an Enterprize, as well as promiſe the Succeſs of it, are ſo hard to be managed and brought about; and when all that is done, a thouſand unforeſeen Incidents occur, and occaſion a Miſcarriage. But nevertheleſs a ſkilful Underſtanding, and a vigo-

rous

rous Activity joined together, will bring us out of Diſorder, and recover a Succeſs at the Point of being loſt.

CHAP. XXII.

A Manner in every Thing. A Letter from the Author to his Friend Don Bartholomew de Morlanes.

THAT Maxim, *a Manner in all Things*, ought to be, *dear Morlanes*, one of the firſt we ſhould ſtudy to practiſe, ſince *Cleobulus* was ranked amongſt the wiſe Men of the firſt Claſs only for having taught it. Not to injure that Philoſopher, or wrong the Judgment of Antiquity, that has honoured him with ſo excellent a Name, I ſhould think it infinitely more glorious to practiſe a thorough Regularity and Decency in our Behaviour, than to teach it in the moſt flouriſhing Academy. To know how to preſcribe excellent Rules and nothing more, is to be only a ſimple Rhetorician; but to teach and to practiſe what one teaches, is to be a Philoſopher in earneſt; that entitles one juſtly to the Denomination of a Philoſopher and wiſe Man in the true Senſe of the Words.

Be that as it will, *A Manner in every Thing*, is one of the acknowledged Maxims neceſſary in Practice; as there are certain Principles allowed as ſelf-evident in Regard to Speculation. No; a Man ſhould never be negligent about the Manner in any Matter whatſoever. The Manner is that which is always moſt obvious and viſible; it is the Outſide, the Mark, the Sign, and the Specification, as it were, of the Thing: By that external we come to the Knowledge of the internal. By the Rind and Outſide of Fruit, which is viſible to the Eye, we conjecture and judge of its Nature and Quality. A Man likewiſe, whom we never

ſaw

ſaw in our Lives, makes himſelf known to us in ſome Meaſure by his Air and his Figure. Thus is a Manner ſo far from being an indifferent Circumſtance with reſpect to Merit, that it is the very Thing which notifies it to our Senſes; it is that which rouzes our Attention, and engages it towards an Object that has already been capable of pleaſing us at firſt Sight. This Sort of Perfection (for a Perfection it is) comes within the Reach and Capacity of all People; conſequently it is unpardonable to renounce it, whatever ſome Pretenders to Solidity may alledge, who look upon Manner as a trifling, inconſiderable Circumſtance. Some Perſons are born with happy Diſpoſitions for the acquiring of this Talent; but yet they will never have it in Perfection, unleſs they themſelves ſecond the Advances, which Nature has made in their Favour. There are others that have no previous Diſpoſitions towards this Talent; theſe muſt remedy that Diſadvantage by their own Induſtry: Art will at leaſt in ſome Meaſure ſupply the Defect of their natural Diſpoſition. But when Nature in this Reſpect is ſeconded by Art and Application, from that Union and Concurrence will proceed a Merit that charms Mankind; a *je ne ſçay quoy*, an inexpreſſible Something, that adorns our Actions, beautifies our Perſons, and ennobles even Nobility itſelf.

TRUTH indeed has its Force, Reaſon its Power, and Juſtice its Authority: But every one of theſe loſes much of its Value, if it be not ſet off and adorned with a becoming Manner; and if it be accompanied with a ſuitable Manner, how greatly then is the Value inhanced: A Manner does yet more; it ſupplies the very Place of the Thing itſelf, and compenſates the Meanneſs or Defect of it. It gives Strength to a feeble Truth, Depth to a ſuperficial Reaſon, and Weight to an inſufficient Authority

Authority. It makes us forget. What do I say? It covers and razes—that is ſtill too little; it graces and adorns the Imperfections of Nature, and makes Amends for the partial Portion ſhe has given us. In a Word, it is a kind of univerſal Supply that furniſhes us with every Thing we want. How many Affairs have been ſpoiled and ruined by a diſagreeable Manner of Behaviour! How many on the other Hand have been proſperous and ſucceſsful purely thro' the Advantage of an agreeable Deportment.

The Monarch's Power, the Stateſman's Zeal, the General's Bravery, the Scholar's Learning, are all imperfect Qualities, if they be deſtitute of a ſuitable graceful Demeanor. But this equivalent, inhancing Circumſtance (if I may expreſs it ſo) becomes a ſubſtantial, eſſential Perfection in thoſe Perſons, that are born to govern, or choſen to command. Generally ſpeaking, all Superiors gain more Reſpect and Deference by Condeſcenſion and Humanity, than by demanding and exacting them in a deſpotick imperious Way. And a Sovereign in particular, who ſhades his Greatneſs with an Air of Kindneſs and Benevolence doubly engages us to our Duty. By that Means he reigns over our Hearts, and conſequently over all the reſt.

In ſhort the Manner is in all Conditions and Situations, an irreſiſtable Attraction and Engagement: It procures Good-will at firſt Sight, and after having made that Step it advances by Degrees, and gains Eſteem; and by theſe progreſſive Motions, it riſes at laſt to Encomiums and Applauſe. We ought then (as I mentioned before) to omit no Means or Pains whatſoever towards the forming of this Talent, if Nature has not planted it in us: For after all, they that are pleaſed with it (and who is there that is not?) do not enquire whether it be natural or acquired: They reliſh

the Pleaſure of it without any farther Examination or Enquiry.

MANNER in Regard to the Productions of Wit and Underſtanding, is almoſt a fundamental Point. In the firſt Place, if any Piece of Literature be grown antiquated and ſunk into Oblivion or Obſcurity, or neglected and thrown by for having been writ by an unſkilful Author, this Talent alone will fetch it out of that Ignominy and Obſcurity, and bring it to Light with Honour and Advantage. It reforms the antique Groſſneſs of ſuch Pieces, that would be offenſive to the modern Politeneſs; it trims and dreſſes them up ſo agreeably, that the World receives them with as much Applauſe, as if they were new Products of the Writer's own Genius. But as we grow every Day more and more perfect, the preſent prevailing Taſte, you will ſay, and not the antient is to be conſulted. I grant it; but yet it is not difficult to ſurprize the modern, reigning Taſte out of a ſuperannuated Compoſition or old-faſhioned Treatiſe. A ſmall Alteration is often ſufficient for that Purpoſe; ſome little new Turn, which diſguiſes the old Thought, and makes it paſs for a new one. Every Thing ſeems to become new in ſome Mens Hands, that have a certain peculiar caſt of Wit. With that Talent they take out all that is flat in a mean Author, all that is inſipid in a trite Subject, and all that is ſervile in an Imitation or Copy. Let the Matter they handle be what it will, hiſtorical or rhetorical, the Hiſtorian will be read, and the Orator will be heard. For though the Subject be common, yet it is treated after a new and uncommon Manner.

IN the ſecond Place; Things that are in themſelves choice and exquiſite ('tis true) do not weary us, though they be repreſented to our Minds over and over. But yet, if they do not weary us, at leaſt

leaſt they ceaſe to entertain us with equal Pleaſure. Now this is the Time we ſhould perceive it neceſſary to have Recourſe to this Talent of Manner, and to give the Subject that new Dreſs, which it ſeems to require. That new Decoration ſtrikes and awakens the Fancy, and pleaſes it as much as if ſome new Objects were preſented to it: Whereas they are only the ſame placed in a new and different Light: Old Pictures, juſt vamped up and new-varniſhed. Theſe then are two Maxims conſtantly true in Matter of Literature; that on one Hand the moſt ingenious Piece will not be exquiſitely pleaſing to the Taſte, if it be not ſeaſoned and diſhed up with an agreeable Manner; on the other Hand, the moſt common or trivial Thing is no longer ſo, if it be treated in a polite Way, in that engaging Manner, which new-models every Thing it takes in Hand.

A Manner is likewiſe of great Advantage in civil Society, in the common ordinary Converſe of Life. Let two Men relate the ſame Story in Company, the one ſhall pleaſe, and the other ſhall diſguſt; this is a wide Difference; Whence does it proceed? Why; it proceeds entirely from the Manner. The one has ſomething in his Air and Manner of Expreſſion, that is affecting and engaging; the other has ſomething aukward and dull in his Perſon and Language, which tires the Hearers and lulls them aſleep. But the worſt of all is, when a Man's Manner and Behaviour is not only not agreeable, but likewiſe poſitively bad and diſagreeable, and that willful and affected too, as is often the Caſe with Men in great Poſts and Employments. How many have we known, whoſe harſh, rude, inſolent, brutiſh Manner has made all Mankind avoid them! *Your haughty ſupercilious Air*, ſaid a wiſe Man once to one that we know, *is not indeed in itſelf a Vice, which ought to brand*,

you with Diſhonour; but nevertheleſs it is a Fault; and ſuch a conſiderable Fault too, that it alienates all civilized People from you, and baniſhes them from your Houſe and Preſence. Have you a Mind to recover and fetch back theſe amiable Fugitives? Do but put on a gracious obliging Air; that Attraction alone will bring them all again. That Metamorphoſis and Change of the out-ſide will perſuade them there was firſt of all one within.

A VOLUME would not be ſufficient to particularize all the Advantages of an agreeable Manner. It intermixes ſo many civil Things even in a Refuſal, that we ſcarcely perceive it to be one; at leaſt we take it more kindly than a Favour granted us with an ill Grace and reluctant Countenance. It ſo qualifies a Reprimand too, that it makes it appear more like a Commendation than Reproof. Under the Form of a kind Approbation of our Conduct, which it ſeems to look upon as diſcreet, it will couch and inſinuate a genteel Remonſtrance, finely to point out and intimate to us, that we are not ſo perfect as we ſhould be. In a Word, a Manner is a ſort of univerſal Specifick for all Diſorders, an univerſal Supplement to all Defects and Imperfections, an univerſal Means towards an univerſal Succeſs.

BUT after all, pray, what is this Manner you ſpeak of? In what does it preciſely conſiſt? It is in ſhort a Thing not to be defined; For it conſiſts in a certain *je ne ſçay quoy*, an inexpreſſible Something, which is not to be defined neither. Without attempting then to explain its Nature and Eſſence, I ſhall only call it an Aſſemblage or Conjunction of Perfections, a Maſterpiece of Work finiſhed by the Hands of all the *Graces*.

WE need not go back to former Ages to fetch an Example of this Maſter-piece, this inexplicable,

explicable, inexpreſſible Something. *Iſabella de Bourbon*, Queen of *Caſtille*, was poſſeſſed of this Union of Perfections, atteſted by the general Admiration and Applauſe of all *Spain*. Not to mention a thouſand other Qualities, which gained her more Glory, than any Queen of her Name ever merited in this Kingdom, this Princeſs had ſuch a charming Manner of Behaviour, ſuch engaging, winning Ways, an Affability ſo natural, eaſy, and majeſtick at the ſame Time, that ſhe gained the Hearts of all that approached her. She did a great deal in a little Time. She lived univerſally admired, and dyed univerſally lamented. Heaven ſoon claimed this angelick Virtue, of which the World was not worthy. *Iſabella de Bourbon*, after having been the too too ſhort-lived Felicity of this Kingdom, was taken hence to the Fruition of an eternal Felicity prepared for her Merits.

CHAP. XXIII.

The Diſcontented without Cauſe, or Fortune juſtified. A Fable.

INFINITE Numbers of People complain of Fortune's ill Uſage; but very few keep an Account of her Favours. This Diſcontentedneſs in Mankind has infected the very Beaſts according to the Syſtem of wiſe *Æſop*. There is not one amongſt the moſt ſtupid of the Brute Animals, but what either bluſters or brays againſt Fortune. Even the Aſs, ſince we muſt call him by his Name, went from Herd to Herd, and from one Company to another to utter his Grievances, and bemoan his lamentable Condition. And he not only met with great Compaſſion for his Sufferings, particularly amongſt his Brethren, that endured the ſame

in common with him, but with great Applauſe too for his complaining. It is ſaid, at the Inſtigation of ſeveral Quadrupeds of various Species, he went at laſt to preſent himſelf before *Jupiter*, upon a Day of general Audience. There in a very humble Poſture he aukwardly begged Leave to lay open the Cauſe of his Coming. And Leave being granted, with a very pitiful Air he uttered the following Harangue yet more pitiful.

O MOST upright *Jupiter*; for I call upon you as a righteous Judge, not as an Avenger. You ſee here in your Majeſtick Preſence the moſt unfortunate, the moſt helpleſs, and the moſt wretched of all Creatures. I come not ſo much to deſire Vengeance for the Wrongs and Injuries which I ſuffer every Day, as to procure a Remedy for my Miſery.

How can your Juſtice, O immortal God, bear with Fortune's Injuſtice to me? She is only blind in Regard to me. She is a wicked Slut, a Shrew, a Step Mother. Nature made me, what I am, the moſt ignorant of Animals; and why would that barbarous Creature make me likewiſe the moſt miſerable? Is not that a treading of all Laws under Foot? In me ſhe perſecutes Innocence, whilſt ſhe favours Wickedneſs in others. The proud imperious Lion triumphs; the cruel Tyger lives; the Fox ſteals with Impunity; and the Wolf devours other People's Flocks. I, that do no Harm to any Body, am abus'd by every Body. Knowing me to be very patient and paſſive, they load me with heavy Burdens, and quite oppreſs me with Labour; I'm not able to endure it. As for Careſſes and Kindneſs there is no Need to mention them; for I am not acquainted with them. But Abuſes and Affronts I have enough of; thoſe I hear with both Ears, of all Kinds, and at all Hours of the Day. As for my feeding, even Thiſtles,

Thiſtles, the Caſt-away of all other Quadrupeds, are given me with Grudgings and Upbraidings; I have not half my Fill. And yet, if I chance, thro' the Importunity of Hunger, to make never ſo little a Stop upon the Road, immediately I am pelted with Blows upon my Back and Sides; for Blows and Affronts are the only Things that are not grudg'd me. Moreover I'm neglected and left in ſo dirty and ſhabby a Condition, that, ugly as I am, I am aſhamed to appear before Gentlemen; and ſo I am forced to ſerve Peaſants and Clowns, that uſe me juſt as they will: And this, I own, troubles me more than all the reſt.

THIS Harangue did not fail to make ſome Impreſſion upon the Hearers. Only *Jupiter*, who is always equal, was not affected with it. He with a grave Majeſtick Air made a Sign, intimating his Pleaſure to have Fortune called upon to be heard in her Turn. Immediately People of all Ranks and Degrees, Men of the Sword, Men of Employments, Men of Letters, all run to ſeek out Fortune, without ever thinking to inform themſelves at once where ſhe was to be met with. They ran over a Thouſand different Places without finding her. They aſked infinite Numbers of People where ſhe reſided, but not one could tell them. Then they went into the ſtately Hall of powerful Credit. There the Hurry and Confuſion was ſo great, and all the People were ſo taken up with their own Buſineſs, that they ſcarce perceived the Strangers, ſo far were they from attending to them, or giving them an Anſwer. From thence they went to the Palace of Riches, where Solicitude at the Threſhold told them in a repining Tone; *Fortune, 'tis true, makes a pretty many Apparitions here; but 'tis only to bring us Troubles and Croſſes.* The Couriers receiving this Anſwer poſted away without making any Reply, and came

came to the Dwelling-houſe of Wiſdom, where they found what they leaſt ſought for: Poverty preſently came out to them and told them; *Fortune is not here at preſent, but we expect her without Impatience.* In ſhort, after a great many vain Searches and Enquiries, the Travellers at laſt eſpied at a Diſtance a gay, ſumptuous Building, that looked like the Work of ſome Fairies. Thither they haſtened their March; and coming near this inchanted Caſtle, they found it well barricado'd and ſecur'd. Theſe Precautions made them conclude they were at their Journey's End. They called out therefore, as loud as they could roar, thundering out the Name of *Jupiter*, and ſaying they were his Meſſengers and Deputies. Upon this Fortune came out at a ſolitary By-place, where ſhe ſometimes retires to avoid the Importunities of Mortals. The Deputies, whom ſhe received with a ſmiling Countenance, declared their Errand and Commiſſion in few Words, and then retired.

FORTUNE in an Inſtant conveyed herſelf before the Throne of *Jupiter*, where every Body crowded to ſee her, and more to be ſeen by her. *Jupiter* in the mean Time ſpoke to her in theſe Terms. "How comes it to paſs, Fortune, that "I hear nothing but daily Complaints againſt "your Conduct? I know indeed 'tis no eaſy Mat-"ter to ſatisfy one ſingle Man, much leſs many, "and impoſſible to ſatisfy all. I know too, that "the moſt Part are weary even of their Eaſe, and "complain of their Situation, or for any Trifle "they want, whilſt they ſhew you no Gratitude "for all the Neceſſaries which they enjoy in Abun-"dance. 'Tis a ſtrange Thing; in others they "always look upon their Bleſſings only, without re-"garding their appendant Inconveniencies; in "themſelves on the contrary they look upon "nothing but their Inconveniences, and overlook

"all

" all their Bleſſings and Advantages. When " they caſt their Eyes upon crowned Heads, they " are wholly taken up and charmed with the " Luſtre of the Diadem; and yet they who wear " it, carry a heavy Burden. For theſe Reaſons I " have not hitherto much hearkened to the Com- " plaints of Men. They are always diſcontented " with their Condition, whatever it is, or can " poſſibly be. But the Complainant here, that is " now the Party againſt you, Fortune, has laid " open a Caſe to us, which ſeems to be of a very " particular Nature. He alledges that his Mis- " fortune is without Precedent or Example; " and he charges you with being the Author " of it. What Anſwer do you make to this " Charge?"

Fortune could hardly forbear ſmiling at the Manner of *Jupiter*'s demanding her Anſwer. But conſidering the Place ſhe was in, ſhe refrain'd, and with great Gravity made this Reply.

" Sovereign *Jupiter*, I ſhall only make Uſe of " two Words to juſtify myſelf from this Imputa- " tion. Be pleaſed to hear them; they are theſe. " My Adverſary here in your Majeſty's Preſence " complains that he is an Aſs. And whoſe Fault " is that?"

The whole Audience applauded the Repartee: *Jupiter* was ſatisfied, and was pleaſed to make the following Speech for the Benefit and Inſtruction of the ſilly Complainant. " Poor Creature, ſays he, " thou wouldſt not be ſo unhappy, if thou hadſt " more Conduct. Go; endeavour for the future " to imitate the Vigilance of the Lion, the Dex- " terity of the Fox, the Prudence of the Elephant, " and the Warineſs of the Wolf. Learn to make " Choice of proper Means for the attaining of what " thou deſireſt, and thou wilt attain it. Then " raiſing his Voice a little: Let all Men, ſays he,

" for

" for once at leaſt be undeceived in what they call " Happineſs and Unhappineſs; let them know, " that the Fountain of the one is Wiſdom, and " the Source of the other is Folly.

CHAP. XXIV.

The laſt Perfection of the Compleat Gentleman. A Moral Fable.

FORMERLY there aroſe, as we find in the Legend of Fables, a Debate of great Conſequence amongſt the Perfections of the Soul. The Point in Queſtion was Precedency, which every one of them thought was his indiſputable Right. The Diſpute at firſt ſeemed to be nothing but a generous Emulation, which made each of them aſpire after the higheſt Degree of Excellence in its Kind. But they inſenſibly grew hot and violent, as it generally happens, when People talk much, and fancy themſelves in the Right. The Thing became a very ſerious Affair, almoſt a kind of Quarrel, in which the Point of Honour might chance to be concerned. However each Competitor, being ſecretly afraid for its Cauſe, laid Claim to its reſpective Hero, and called him in to its Aſſiſtance. The ſeveral Heroes immediately engag'd for the Parties, to which they owed their Glory; they were but few in Number, only the Flower of the moſt illuſtrious Perſonages. Every Heroe defended his particular Cauſe with great Vivacity, and ſpoke in very magnificent Terms of that Perfection, which had rendered him eminent and conſpicuous. The General of the Army extolled *Valour* above all Things; the Stateſman, *Policy*; and the Orator, *Eloquence*.

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But the Point, which was likely to occaſion the greateſt Trouble, and which none of them however forgot in his Encomium, was Immortality. The Competitors had all merited it, and conſequently ſeemed to be upon equal Terms in that Reſpect. In the mean Time the Evidence of Fact determined Nothing. The Matter reſted upon the more or the leſs Right, which each of them had acquired to Immortality. And as this was an eſſential Point, they diſputed it with ſo much Warmth and Vehemence, that they ſhook the very Roof of the Palace of Heroiſm. Fame and Fortune, who were both preſent at this Adventure, wherein they muſt neceſſarily be concerned, neither decided *pro* nor *con*, but wavered and ſtaggered in their Evidence according to the Diverſity of Incidents and Circumſtances. Thus, every one growing ſtill more and more obſtinate in his own Cauſe, the Diſpute ſeemed to threaten endleſs Contention, till a Philoſopher roſe up and ſpoke with Authority to this Effect. "This Conteſt is "the Child of Chaos and Confuſion. Why "ſhould not the Matter be referred to a diſin-"tereſted Umpire, whoſe equitable Judgment "may be a final Deciſion without Appeal." They all unanimouſly agreed to the Philoſopher's Propoſition, and engaged themſelves to ſubmit to the Sentence of an impartial Umpire. But by ſhunning one Inconvenience they fell into another. For where could they find an impartial Tribunal to be determined by? The moſt equitable undoubtedly was that of *Aſtrea*, who renders Juſtice to all the World without Exception. But how was it poſſible to find her, who had left the Habitations of Men ſo many Ages ago?

However the Philoſopher, who had propoſed the Expedient of Arbitration, ſuggeſted an Umpire which they could not reaſonably refuſe. Not one

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of them beſides himſelf had thought upon it: So deeply was every one taken up with his Prepoſſeſſions in Favour of his own perſonal Perfection. This Arbitrator then was Truth. But they were a great while in ſeeking her out; nor would they ever have found her, had it not been for the Diſciples of Wiſdom, who implored her Aſſiſtance upon this preſſing Emergency. She was retired into an obſcure Cove, reſolving never to appear more, becauſe ſhe was ſo much belied and defamed in all Places. At firſt ſhe alledged an Indiſpoſition, which had almoſt deprived her of the Uſe of her Tongue; this was, becauſe they had told her, that ſeveral Monarchs were intereſted in the Affair in Queſtion. But the Diſciples of Wiſdom had been ſo prudent and precautious as to provide a Safe-conduct and *Charte-blanche* for her, that ſhe might ſpeak with abſolute Freedom and Liberty. She then made her Appearance amongſt the Perfections and the Heroes, darting and diffuſing on every Side reſplendent Rays of genuine Light. And though no Body loves her, yet they were all charmed with the Sight of her, every one perhaps flattering himſelf, that ſhe would decide in his Favour.

After Truth had met with an agreeable Reception from the Heroick Aſſembly ſhe ſat down in a Throne, that was prepared for her. The Competitors then ſummed up in few Words what they had ſaid before; and every one repeated his Encomium upon that particular Perfection, which had entitled him to Immortality. Truth heard them all; commended all the Perfections in general; and then entring into Particulars, ſhe praiſed and illuſtrated each Perfection in ſuch a Manner, that they always thought ſhe was going to give the Precedency to that, which ſhe was diſcourſing upon. And after this pleaſant and inſtructive

ſtructive Preamble was over, ſhe concluded in theſe Words.

" EMINENT Qualities, you that conſtitute the " immortal Honour of the Hero, the wiſe Man, " and the univerſal Man, I eſteem you all; I ad- " mire you all, let none of you doubt it. But " yet I cannot diſſemble what is true, for in that " I ſhould deſtroy my ſelf, and ceaſe to be what " I am. I ſay then, there is one Thing, which " has all this while been ſuppreſſed, and not taking " notice of amongſt you, and yet is the very Thing " that muſt give the laſt Seal, the finiſhing Hand " to all the Perfections here aſſembled. The " Thing I mean is, what *Seneca* calls Man's only " Good; *Ariſtotle*, the Glory of Humanity; " *Saluſt*, the Badge of Immortality; *Cicero*, the " Root of true Happineſs; *Apuleius*, an Impreſs " of the Deity; *Sophocles*, inexpreſſible Riches; " *Euripides*, a rare Treaſure; *Virgil*, the Beauty " of the Soul; *Cato*, the Foundation of Autho- " rity; *Socrates*, the Baſis of Felicity; *Menander*, " his Buckler; *Horace*, his Strength; *Bias*, his " all; *Valerius Maximus*, a Thing ineſtimable; " *Plautus*, the Price of all Things; *Cæſar*, the " Perfection of all great Qualities; and what I, " in one Word, call Virtue.

CHAP. XXV.

The Diſtribution of the Compleat Gentleman's Life.

THE wiſe and compleat Man is an Oeconomiſt of his Time; he divides his Life into regular, diſtinct Portions, wiſely conſidering how comprehenſive the Span is, how infinite the Importance of

it, and how ſhort the Duration. Life, however ſhort it is on other Accounts; yet, if it were not diſtributed into Parts, would be like a long tedious Road without Lodgings or Accommodation. Nature, expoſed to our Eyes for our Inſtruction, divides herſelf in the Space of one ſingle Year into four different Seaſons. And this Variety in the Univerſe repreſents that Diverſity of Ages, which make up the Series and Contexture of human Life. The Spring, abounding with tender Flowers, is our Infancy; which is full of nothing but frail Hopes. The Summer is our Youth; a tempeſtuous hot Seaſon, wherein the Paſſions are kept in a violent Ferment and Agitation, though the perpetual boiling of our Blood. Autumn crowned with Fruits is our Man-hood; it is the ripe Age of Man, full-grown and mature in his Principles, Projects and Counſels. Laſt of all is Winter; which is a true Symbol of Old-age, ſucceeding our Manhood. Then every Thing in us begins to decay, our Eyes grow weak, our Hair grey, our Teeth ſhake, Wrinkles come, and, the Blood is chilled: The whole man trembles, ready at every Step to fall and tumble into his Grave.

THIS Diverſity of Ages and Seaſons in the Courſe of Nature, the wiſe Man proportionably imitates in the Courſe and Order of moral Life. The firſt Part of his reaſonable Years (if I may term them ſo) he employs in converſing with the Dead; the ſecond in converſing with the Living; and the laſt, with himſelf. Let us expound this little Myſtery. I mean then, that the wiſe Man dedicates the firſt Part of his Life to Reading; and this is not ſo properly Buſineſs or Imployment, as it is a diſpoſing and preparing of himſelf for it. However this Sort of Study deſerves its Commendation;

dation; for to learn is the nobleſt Exerciſe and Operation of the Mind; as Knowledge is the peculiar Perfection that diſtinguiſheth Mankind, and gives one a Pre-eminence over another. But if a Man would improve and adorn his Mind to the beſt Advantage by his Reading, he ought to know what Books are moſt excellent and valuable in their Kind. The Way to attain this uſeful, neceſſary Knowledge is to converſe with learned Men, and aſſiſt our own diſcerning Faculty with their Judgments and Approbation.

He begins with the Study of Languages, in the firſt Place with *Latin* and *Spaniſh*, which are the two univerſal Tongues, and the Keys of the World at this Day. He then applies himſelf to *Greek*, to *French*, *Italian*, *Engliſh* and *Dutch*. This underſtanding of Languages is highly neceſſary towards our excelling in other Sciences; it enables us to know, to compare, and to uſe upon Occaſion the various Thoughts, which the fine Genius's of different Countries have had upon a Subject.

From Languages he proceeds to Hiſtory, with this Caution, to pick and cull out thoſe that are moſt inſtructive and entertaining at the ſame Time. He begins with ancient Hiſtory, and ends with modern. A great many People indeed follow the contrary Method. But that, methinks, is againſt natural Order, and attended with this Inconvenience; that it leaves the ancient to a great Hazard of not being read at all, becauſe on Account of the Diſtance of Time, it is leſs apt to engage our Affections or excite our Curioſity. However, the moſt eſſential Point is not to chooſe the moſt florid, but the moſt accurate Writers; whether in ſacred or prophane Hiſtory, in that of our own, or of other Countries. And, to prevent, as much as poſſible,

all Confuſion and Forgetfulneſs, we ſhould range and digeſt the Things we read into ſome compendious Form or other, to make them more portable for the Memory. We ſhould carefully mark down Times, Epochs, Centuries, Ages; the Extent of Empires, Kingdoms, Common-wealths, their Progreſs, Revolutions, Changes and Declenſions; the Number, Order and Qualities of the Princes, that have reigned over thoſe States and Kingdoms, their Actions Military and Civil. A Man, I own, ought to have a happy Memory to retain all this; but a certain Syſtem which he may form by his Judgment, will be a great Relief and Aſſiſtance to the Memory, and ſupply what is wanting to its Perfection.

FROM hence he takes a Turn into the delightful Gardens of Poetry; not ſo much to exerciſe himſelf in the Art, as to gather up the Flowers and Beauties of it. The reading of the Poets is not only an exquiſite Pleaſure to the Mind, but it is moreover of infinite Advantage, and in ſome meaſure, if not abſolutely neceſſary. And tho' a Gentleman be too prudent to make Poetry his Buſineſs or Profeſſion, yet he has not ſo little of the Poet in him, but he can make a Copy of Verſes upon Occaſion. But let that be his *ne plus ultra*. Let him beware of falling into the Indiſcretion of frequent poetizing. He reads all the true Poets; that is, all thoſe that have excelled. Their Works are full of judicious Sentences, ſublime Thoughts, noble Sentiments, elegant Turns, happy Expreſſions; in a Word of a thouſand delicate Strokes and Touches of all Kinds, which form, elevate and embelliſh the Underſtanding. But tho' he eſteems all the Maſters of the Art, and derives Benefit and Improvement from them all, yet he has ſome that are his peculiar Favou-

rites,

rites, that he more particularly cheriſhes than the reſt. Such is *Horace* for Example, or * *Martial*; the one is a conſtant, perfect Model of true Wit, delicate Senſe, elegant Choice, exquiſite Taſte, and Excellence in every Reſpect: the other is undoubtedly the moſt extraordinary, and will remain ſo, in the Art of cooking up a Thought with the moſt poinant Seaſoning and exquiſite Reliſh. To Poetry he adds the other Parts of liberal, genteel Knowledge, and ſo gathers up a Treaſure of that agreeable polite Learning, which gives Luſtre and Beauty to the moſt abſtruſe Sciences.

From this polite Learning he enters upon Philoſophy, and in the firſt Place upon Natural Philoſophy. He ſtudies the firſt Principles of Things, the Structure of the Univerſe, the Contexture of human Bodies, the Properties of Beaſts, the Virtues of Plants, and the Qualities of Metals. But he dwells the longeſt upon Ethicks, or Moral Philoſophy, which is the proper Food of the Soul, and what perfects her in all the Virtues and Qualifications of a Gentleman. This Science is to be collected chiefly out of the Sages and Philoſophers, who have reduced it into Sentences, Axioms, Emblems, Satyrs and Fables. He grows enamoured of *Seneca*, *Plato*, the ſeven Wiſemen, *Epictetus*, *Plutarch*, without diſdaining the amuſing and inſtructive *Æſop*.

He then applies himſelf to Coſmography of both Kinds; he learns to meaſure the Land and the Sea; to diſtinguiſh Climates, Latitudes, and the four Diviſions of the World; the Provinces, Nations, Kingdoms and Republicks com-

* *Gratian* was of *Bilbilis*, the Poet *Martial*'s Country.

prized therein. He finds a double Advantage in this Study; the one is to know all this, and the other is to be able to diſcourſe upon it; that he may not be like a great many ignorant Perſons, that ſcarce know the Climate they live in. He then acquires the Knowledge of the celeſtial Globes, which roll over our Heads; he obſerves their various Motions, numbers the Stars and Planets, and acquaints himſelf with their Influences and Effects. As to Aſtrology, he examines no farther into that than Wiſdom allows.

All theſe Studies terminate in the conſtant reading the Holy Scriptures: For that is undoubtedly the moſt profitable, the moſt comfortable, the moſt agreeable and ſatisfactory Reading, both for the Sublimity and Variety of the Matter contained in the ſacred Pages. King *Don Alphonſo*, the Magnanimous, in all the Multiplicity of his important Affairs of Peace and War, found Time to read the whole Bible fourteen Times over, together with Commentators and Expoſitors.

This is the Price, at which he purchaſed the glorious Appellation of a Compleat Gentleman. Moral Philoſophy makes the honeſt man; natural Philoſophy the ingenious Man; Hiſtory the Man of Experience; Poeſy the Man of Wit; Rhetorick the eloquent Man; polite Learning ſheds a diffuſive Grace and Ornament upon all Kinds of Literature; the Knowledge of the World conſtitutes the intelligent Man; the Study of the ſacred Pages forms the good Man; but all this muſt go together to make the perfect, compleat Gentleman. Such a one was *Don Sebaſtian de Mendoza, Count de Corugua.*

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THE ſecond Part of Life he dedicates to the Converſation and Knowledge of the Living, and to enjoy the greater Variety of that Pleaſure he travels into different Nations and foreign Countries. This Inclination to travelling is a great Happineſs to him that undertakes it for the Sake of Improvement, with the Curioſity of getting a perſonal Information of Things, provided he has a Capacity for that Purpoſe. He meets with ſome Fatigue indeed in ſeeking and ſearching; but then he finds infinite Pleaſure and Satisfaction in diſcovering and examining all the Curioſities of the World, and in making his Uſes and Improvements from them. What a Man does not ſee, he does not properly know, and can only reliſh imperfectly. There is a great Difference in this Reſpect between the Eyes and the Imagination. A judicious Traveller has two conſiderable Advantages; the one is, to have a juſter Knowledge of what relates to foreign Countries, than other People have; and the other is to reap more Pleaſure from it, than any other Perſons can poſſibly do. For he that ſees curious Objects but once, has a very different Senſe of them from him that ſees them every Day. Thoſe Rarities and Wonders are common to the latter; but in regard to the former they have the Charm of Novelty, which both excites and gratifies his Curioſity. When a magnificent Palace is firſt finiſhed, it is for a while the Delight of the Owner; but in a little Time that Pleaſure forſakes him, and is transferred to Strangers. The Benefit a Man reaps from travelling is very obvious. In the firſt Place he brings Home at leaſt experimental Knowledge, which has always been eſteemed by wiſe Men. For this Knowledge undeceives us by

by the Teſtimony of our own Eyes in regard to the falſe Accounts and Deſcriptions, which ill-informed Writers have given of a Country; and confirms the Fidelity of thoſe Deſcriptions, that are made by juſt and accurate Authors.

As to the Places, which he travels to, he generally confines himſelf to thoſe, that are of greateſt Note; as *Spain*, *France*, *England*, *Germany*, *Muſcovy*, and above all, *Italy*, where he makes his longeſt Reſidence. There he views and obſerves at Leiſure all the Cities of greateſt Fame, and all that is curious and ſingular in each, whether of antient or modern Date; the Magnificence of the Churches, the ſumptuous and noble Architecture of the Palaces: There he remarks their Wiſdom in Government and Policy, the underſtanding of the Inhabitants, the bright Genius's and fine Wits amongſt the Nobility and People of Literature.

THERE are many other Articles of Importance to be taken Notice of in one's Travels; one of the moſt material is to frequent the Courts of the moſt powerful Princes; for they are not inacceſſible to Merit.

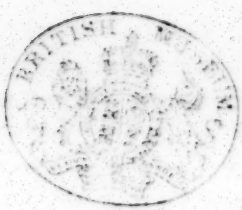
THERE he finds every Thing, which either Art or Nature can produce; whatever is moſt rare and curious in Gardens, Terraſſes, Fruits, Paintings, Statues, Jewels, Cabinets and Libraries. There he converſes with the greateſt and ableſt Men in every Way, in Politicks, in Letters, in military Skill, in Arts and in Virtue. And when he has judiciouſly examined and conſidered all this for his own Improvement, he makes a juſt and proper Eſtimate of it, without under-

undervaluing it on one Hand, or over-rating it on the other.

The laſt Portion of Life, which is the beſt, and ſhould be the longeſt, he ſpends in converſing with himſelf; that is, in conſidering, ruminating and meditating upon all that he has read and ſeen, in order to make ſuch an Uſe of it, as becomes his Character and Condition. For whatever enters into our Minds thro' the Medium of our attentive Senſes, ſettles in our Underſtandings, and remains there to be made Uſe of and digeſted after our own Way. By this Means every ſenſible Thing becomes in ſome Sort intellectual, is weighed, examined, judged and determined by the Ballance of our Reaſon. And all the Subject-matter of our Reading undergoes the ſame Tryal; we revolve, unravel and define it, we make a nice and critical Judgment of it, in order to ſeparate the true from the falſe, and the ſolid from the trivial and inſignificant. But the Time for theſe wiſe Reflections and Meditations (as I obſerved before) is our full and mature Age. Then the Underſtanding being grown more independent on the Senſes thro' long Experience, and leſs clogged and incumbered by the Neceſſities of the Body, which are commonly ſupernumerary in the Time of Youth, then, I ſay, the Underſtanding is come to its full Vigour and perfect Liberty. Then it apprehends and is affected in a very different Manner from what it was heretofore. Its Maturity ſheds its Influence upon all our Thoughts and Sentiments. O the inexpreſſible Happineſs of thinking and reflecting in this Manner! To know and to perceive what Things are proper for our Inſtruction, is what our intelligent Man may do; but

but to reflect upon them afterwards, and to digeſt them well, is the wiſe Man's Province. To reaſon and philoſophize in this efficacious Way, to rectify and undeceive the Mind in regard to all Objects whatſoever is the ſovereign Point and Perfection of Wiſdom. And this Philoſophy chiefly conſiſts in the frequent Meditation upon our latter End; that is the Point in which all our Thoughts ſhould centre, in Order to dye well once for all.

FINIS.



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